The main purpose of this book is to serve as a basis for reflection on the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches (the four ancient Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem, that of Georgia and Patriarchates founded later in Russia, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria, as well as some autocephalous and autonomous Churches) and Oriental Orthodox Churches (of the Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian and Syriac traditions), with unofficial dialogue since 1964 and official dialogue since 1985. The breach began with a theological controversy concerning the relation between the human and divine natures in Christ centred on the expression "two natures (*physeis*) in one Person", a new Christological formula adopted at the Council of Chalcedon (451).

As agreed at Chambésy (Geneva) in November 1993, we can state that: "Both families have always loyally maintained the authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways". Further questions—unrelated to Christology—have also been raised. Another issue of the utmost importance is that of practical dialogue. Political, sociological, cultural, linguistic and even psychological factors in creating tension have also played a role in the division. These topics must be tackled and certain areas clarified for future steps of the dialogue in order to facilitate the restoration of full ecclesial communion—that is to arrive at complete unity.

This dialogue should become widely known and understood not only by theologians and scholars but also by ordinary people. Another aim of the book is to enhance the knowledge of this dialogue in all Churches for their own bilateral ecumenical dialogues with the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

**Christine Chaillot** is Swiss (Geneva) and Orthodox (Patriarchate of Constantinople). She is the author and editor of several articles and books on the life and spirituality of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, on the Eastern Orthodox and also on the Dialogue between these two families of Churches. Her books have been published in eight languages.

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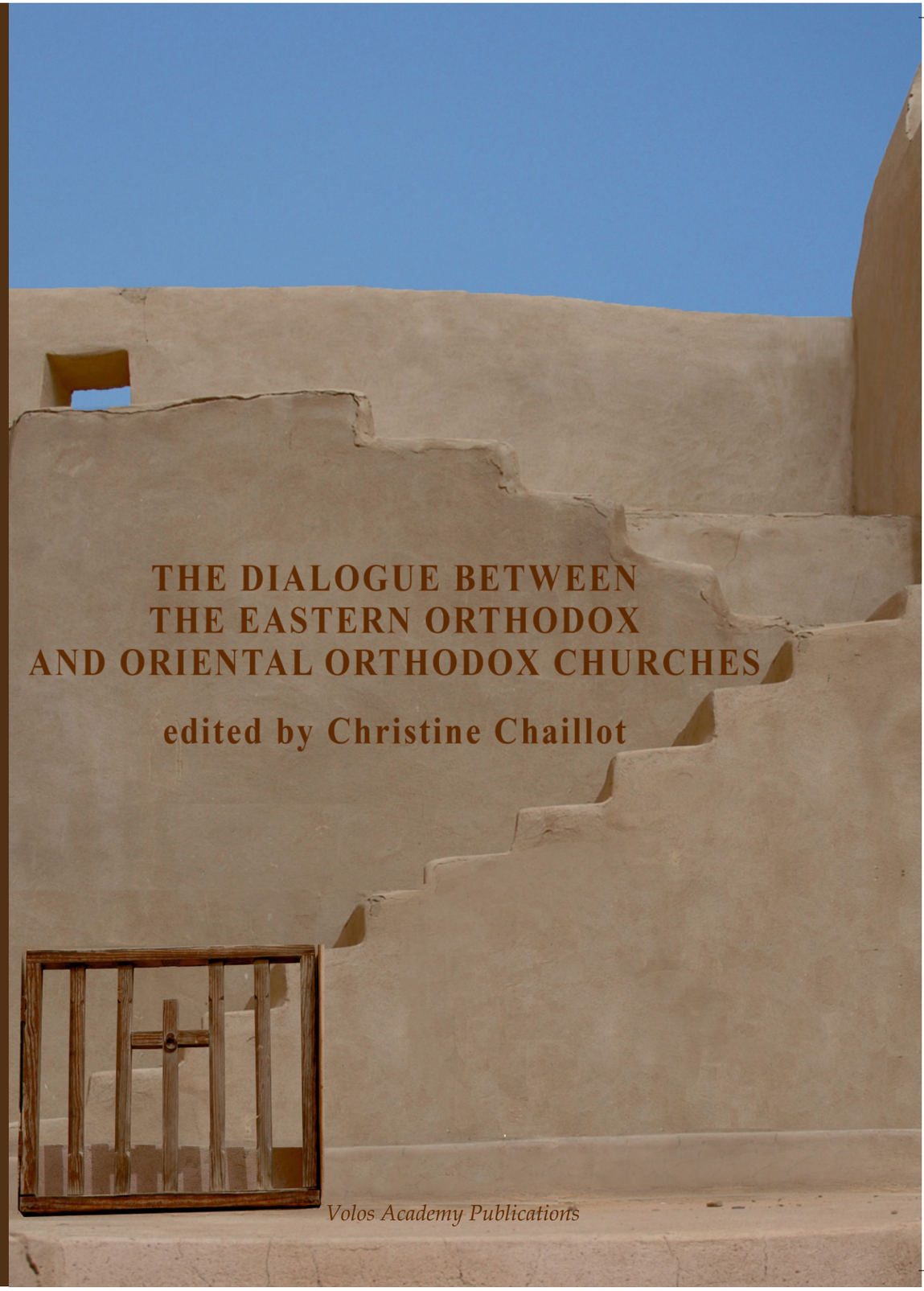


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THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE EASTERN ORTHODOX AND ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES

edited by Christine Chaillot





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Edited by
Christine Chaillot

Foreword by
His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

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Cover design by Eric Jabouille, based on a photograph by Olya Gluschenko.
View in a Coptic monastery in Egypt with the following symbolism: "The wooden gate bears a cross. It is closed but capable of being opened for dialogue and for climbing the steps towards unity, with knowledge, work, humility and love".

The personal style of the authors in their articles was respected by the editing team.

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"We neither separate nor divide the human nature in Christ from His divine nature, nor do we think that the former was absorbed in the latter and thus ceased to exist (…) Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ, do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ, do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion".

*Dialogue Between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, Meeting at St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 1989*

"In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology as well as of the above common affirmations, we have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways".

*Dialogue Between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, Chambésy, Switzerland, 1990*

"This is one of the most important dialogues of its kind because it confirms the sincere attempt of the two sides for restoration of the unity of the Church, which is the aim of all the theological dialogues. Specifically, it signifies the coming to unity of most of the Christians of the East (…)"

Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland (1936-2011)

"As to the manner of the incarnation of the Only Begotten, then theoretically speaking (but only in so far as it appears to the eyes of the soul) we would admit that there are two united natures, but only one Christ and Son and Lord, the Word of God made man and made flesh".

St. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376-444)

"If one nature is said for the indissoluble and indivisible union and not for the confusion, and two natures for being unconfused and immutable and not for the division, both are within the bounds of orthodoxy".

St. Nerses the Gracious, Catholicos of the Armenians (1171)

"(…) These are not another one and another one, but one substance and one person of two natures united in one Christ with a union without confusion and without separation (…) to be one nature out of two opposite natures and none of these natures loses its essence in the unity (…) as we confess the two natures being one, and that in the union neither one of these two natures was lost, likewise for the wills, we do not say one and another will, as if the divine will was opposed to the human will or the

human will to the divine will. But being out of one essence a double will, they act accordingly in different times, i.e. sometimes acting the divine will when Christ wished to manifest the power of His Godhead, and sometimes acting the human will when He wanted to reveal the humility of His manhood".

St. Nerses the Gracious, Catholicos of the Armenians (1171)

"The Copts are right. They, just as the Armenians, are not heretics, and should not be called Monophysites in the sense of the coalescence or change of the two natures of Christ into one, because they not only reject, but anathematize the coalescence and in accordance with the Universal Church sincerely confess the union of the two natures and the formation from them of the one Hypostasis without any change in their properties".

Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky (1804-1885),
Vicar of the Eparchy of Kiev,
the Founder of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem and Orientalist

"We sincerely accept the defence of our non-Chalcedonian brethren for their past. Our side can also present a similar defence. If we take this line, the next step will be polemics. We say we are individual theologians. I do not consider myself as such. My Church sent me here to speak on her behalf –not for polemics, but for unity. I am here to find the common ground (…) We must look for the ground of unity. The details can be worked out by a commission".

Fr. Vitaly Borovoy (1981)

"Nous espérons sincèrement qu'avec l'aide de Dieu seront progressivement élucidés et écartés les malentendus qui avaient surgi au cours de l'histoire, conséquence de l'action de maints facteurs non théologiques et que (...) nous nous rapprocherons infailliblement de l'instant (…) d'une pleine communion dans la foi (…)"

Metropolitan Nicodeme of Leningrad (1970)

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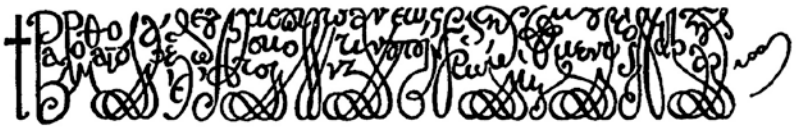
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FOREWORD

By His All-Holiness
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

It is with great joy that we are providing the foreword for the book entitled *The Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox*, edited by Christine Chaillot.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate was since the early 1980s interested in discerning and healing the theological differences, while understanding and clarifying the divisions between the Eastern Orthodox and the ancient Oriental Churches. The principal issue at stake is Christology and the relevant doctrinal definition of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The first official session of the bilateral theological dialogue established by the Ecumenical Patriarchate was held in 1985.

This dialogue was placed on the agenda for the future Pan-Orthodox Council as early as 1930. In 1951, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras issued an encyclical on the occasion of the fifteenth centenary of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451 AD), highlighting the importance of realizing full unity with the family of Orientals. In 1959, addressing the Institute of Higher Coptic Studies in Cairo, he observed: "In truth we are all one, we are all Orthodox Christians ... We have the same sacraments, the same history, the same traditions. The divergence is on the level of phraseology."

Such was the atmosphere of fraternal disposition from the outset of the unofficial theological conversations in 1964. By 1990, the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue proclaimed: "In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology, we have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways. It is this common faith and continuous loyalty to the Apostolic Tradition that should be the basis of our unity and communion."

In 2005, the Communiqué issued by the Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee for Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the ancient Oriental Churches at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva, declared: "This Theological Dialogue ... is particularly important, as proclaimed by the relevant unanimous decision of the 3rd Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (1986), and must therefore be continued to complete the work of both the Joint Theological Commission and the Sub-Committees on the pastoral, liturgical and canonical issues. Dialogue at the practical level must also be implemented."

To date no pan-Orthodox decision has been taken with regard to the restoration of full communion. The principal role of the Joint Commission was and still is to study theological issues and develop common texts for proposal. It is our fervent prayer that this matter will be advanced—sincerely and solemnly, with confidence albeit without compromise—with a view to the full restoration of unity.

We hope that this publication will encourage and inform clergy and laity as well as church leaders and academic scholars on the importance of our relations and dialogue.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the 28th of September, 2016

ὁ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Βαρθολομαῖος

✠ **BARTHOLOMEW**
Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch

# General Introduction

*Christine Chaillot*

## *1. Introduction*

The main purpose of this book is to serve as a basis for reflection on the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches. Each article should help us think about how we can develop this dialogue in a positive way, a way that leads towards unity.[1]

Another aim is to enhance the knowledge of this dialogue in all Churches for their own bilateral ecumenical dialogues with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. This dialogue should become widely known and understood not only by theologians and scholars but also by ordinary people.

The name of "Eastern" and "Oriental" Orthodox Churches is a convention recently established for distinguishing between the two Church traditions of Eastern Christianity. In 1985, at the beginning of their official Dialogue, the first part of the discussions centred on the appellation of the two families of Churches: Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox.[2]

The Eastern Orthodox Churches include the four ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople; that of Georgia; the Patriarchates founded later of Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania; as well as the Autocephalous Churches of Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Albania, the Czech Lands and Slovakia. Also included are some autonomous Churches such as those of Sinai and Finland.

The Oriental Orthodox Churches include four ancient Churches: Coptic Orthodox (Egypt), Armenian[3], Ethiopian and Syrian Orthodox[4] as well as two other Churches: the Autocephalous Malankara Orthodox Syrian Catholicosate (India) and the Eritrean Patriarchate.[5] Nowadays, due to great movements of

---

[1] *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches* was the title of a book I edited in 1998 with the publication of all the texts of the unofficial and official dialogue and other texts, so as to facilitate knowledge and study of this dialogue.

[2] In their introduction ("The Four Unofficial Conversations: an Experience of Joy and Hope," in *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology*, eds. Paulos Mar Gregorios, W. H. Lazareth and N. A. Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), ix), the editors explain that: "The distinction between 'Eastern' and 'Oriental' Orthodox Churches is often not only untranslatable into other languages, but also unfamiliar even to English-speaking people. It is a convention recently established for distinguishing between the two different Church traditions of Eastern Christianity." The Oriental Orthodox Churches insist on being called "Orthodox" in order to distinguish themselves from parallel Churches with faithful who have the same origin but became Catholic or Protestant. Some still call them "Ancient Oriental Churches" or "Monophysite".

[3] With two Catholicosates in Etchmiadzin and Antelias near Beirut in Lebanon as well as two Patriarchates in Jerusalem and Istanbul.

[4] With faithful mostly in Syria, South-East Turkey, Iraq as well as in India, where about half are in the Syrian Orthodox Catholicosate under the Patriarchate of Antioch.

[5] The Malankara Orthodox Syrian Catholicosate was founded in 1912 with the election of Mar Baselios I Paulos (1912-14). The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was under the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria until it became autocephalous in 1959, with its see in Addis Ababa. Under it was the

emigration, these Christian communities of the two families of Churches (Eastern and Oriental Orthodox) are also found in all parts of the world.

The breach of ecclesial communion between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox occurred gradually during the fifth and sixth centuries as a result of a theological controversy concerning the relation between the human and divine natures in Christ. This controversy was centred on the expression "two natures in one Person", a new Christological formula adopted at the Council of Chalcedon (451).[6] Political, sociological, cultural, linguistic and even psychological factors in creating tension have also played a role in the division.[7]

Since Chalcedon, there have been attempts down the centuries at reconciliation,[8] for example, in the fifth century by the Emperor Zeno with the *Henotikon* (482), in the sixth century (532 and 553) by the Emperor Justinian and in the seventh century (630 and 633) by the Emperor Heraclius. But these proved unsuccessful and the situation stagnated after the Arab conquests of the 630s. Dialogue also took place between the Armenian and the Byzantine Churches from the 9th to the 12th centuries.[9]

Even though the two sides came close to reconciliation a number of times, the separation continues to this day. In reality, however, daily contact between the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox communities were never completely broken as they lived (and still live) side by side in many places of the Middle East and around the world.

The unofficial dialogue between these two families of Churches began in 1964, followed by the Official Dialogue in 1985. These unofficial and official conversations covered issues to be agreed upon before communion could be restored.[10]

In 1989 the two elected co-presidents of the Official Dialogue were Metropolitan Bishoy (Coptic Orthodox Church with his see in Damietta) to

---

Eritrean Orthodox Church until a patriarchate, with its see in Asmara, was founded in 1998 following the creation of Eritrea in 1993. For their history see A. S. Atiya, *History of Eastern Christianity* (New York: Millwood, 1980). For their life and spirituality see C. Chaillot, *Vie et spiritualité des Eglises orthodoxes orientales* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011).

[6] *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?*, ix-xii.

[7] On this see for example J.-C. Larchet, *Personne et nature. La Trinité – Le Christ – L'Homme* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011), 73: "On peut considérer que l'opposition mutuelle pouvait être due à 'des facteurs politiques, sociologiques ou psychologiques'" and he adds (97) also cultural and linguistic ones.

[8] See in the present volume the chronology and the important article by N. Russell "Cyril of Alexandria's *Mia-physis* Formula in the Christological Debates of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries".

[9] The detailed history of the dialogue throughout the centuries up to the present time, in different places and by different people, should be also archived and written down.

[10] For the texts and commentaries see *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR] 10/2 (1964-65); 13/2 (1968); 16/1 and 2 (1971); *Abba Salama* 6 (1975): 233-254 and 7 (1976): 93-227; *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. Ch. Chaillot (Geneva: 1998); *Growth in Agreement II: Reports and Agreed Statements of Ecumenical Conversations on a World Level 1982-1998*, ed. Jeffrey Gros, FSC, Harding Meyer and William G. Rusch (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2000); *Restoring the Unity in Faith. The Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Theological Dialogue*, ed. T. FitzGerald and E. Gratsias (Boston MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007); Portions of the last essay first appeared as "Towards the Reestablishment of Full Communion: The Orthodox – Oriental Orthodox Dialogue", GOTR 36/2 (1991), 169-182.

represent the Oriental Orthodox Churches and Metropolitan Damaskinos Papandreou (d. 2011) (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, with see in Chambésy, Geneva) who was replaced in 2001 by Metropolitan Emmanuel Adamakis (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, with his see in Paris).

In the common Christological study of the Council of Chalcedon, since 1964, emphasis has been placed on St. Cyril of Alexandria's phrase *mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene* (the one incarnate *physis* of God's Word).[11] In this formula the theologians of the Joint Commission have found their common Christological ground, that of their common Father, St. Cyril of Alexandria[12] (Aarhus 1964). St. Cyril of Alexandria remains the Church Father *par excellence* for all the Oriental Orthodox Churches. We must never forget that St. Cyril is also a great Church Father for all the Chalcedonians, as explained in the articles below.[13]

The theologians of the Joint Commission also realized that the Council of Chalcedon must be understood as reaffirming the decisions of the Council of Ephesus (431), and best understood in the light of the later Council of Constantinople (553). They have recognised that all councils have to be seen as stages in an integral development and that no Council or document should be studied in isolation (Aarhus 1964).

The official Dialogue began in Chambésy near Geneva in December 1985, with subsequent meetings in the Coptic Orthodox monastery of Saint Bishoy in Egypt (1989), and again at Chambésy (1990 and 1993).[14] The following main theme and related sub-themes agreed upon were summed up in: "Towards a Common Christology".[15]

*2. The Theological Issue: The Christological Misunderstanding*

Why did these Churches, today called Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, undergo such a schism? In 451, at the Council of Chalcedon, the expression "two natures" (in Greek *physeis*) was used. Some participants rejected this formulation because they were afraid that it would imply a separation between the divinity and the humanity in Christ. This was not the case, as the full formulation specifies that the two natures are united in *one* person (*hypostasis*).

---

[11] *Cf.* The Agreed Statement of the Joint Commission St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 20-24 June 1989. See appendix in this volume. *This formula was taken up again at the Fifth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople II) in 553.*

[12] In the Eastern Orthodox New Calendar, St. Cyril is commemorated on June 9th as his own day; and on January 18th, in the company of Saint Athanasius the Great. The festal *Troparion* says: "Rejoice most blessed Cyril, spring of theology and river of the knowledge of God".

[13] As noted by John A. McGuckin in his *St. Cyril of Alexandria, the Christological Controversy* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 227: "Even before the end of his own lifetime Cyril was regarded as the authentic representative of the christological tradition"; and 242: "Cyril stands as the chief protagonist of the classical doctrine of Christ". In Athens, in November 2014, the Co-Chairman Metropolitan Emmanuel of France in his opening speech underlined as the decisive criterion the common acceptance of the christological teaching of our common Father St. Cyril of Alexandria together with our common patristic and ecclesiological tradition of the first five centuries.

[14] On the history of this bilateral dialogue see the article in this volume by Metropolitan Damaskinos.

[15] See text in the appendix of this volume.

Those Churches that accepted the Chalcedonian statement (or "Chalcedonians") were accused by the non-Chalcedonians of being "diophysites" or followers of Nestorius. The Chalcedonians gave the name of "monophysites" to those who rejected the Council of Chalcedon:[16] they thought that they believed only in one nature (*physis*), the divine nature (of Christ), which would have absorbed its human nature, as the heretic Eutyches (d. 454) had proclaimed.[17]

The Oriental Orthodox object to being called "monophysites". The term "monophysites" is now regarded as pejorative and should not be used as it is seen by the Oriental Orthodox Churches as improper and even as an insult. These Churches prefer being named "miaphysite" (*mia* standing for a composite unity whereas *mono* means an elemental unity), a modern designation.[18]

With regard to the expressions "one nature" and "two natures", both are used by several Fathers of the Oriental Orthodox Churches as, for instance, Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria, Patriarch Severus of Antioch, or later by the Armenian Catholicos Nerses as well as by contemporary Oriental Orthodox authors.[19]

Thus the only theological point to be studied in the dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox is about the interpretation of the Greek word *physis* in the Christological formulation of St. Cyril and the misunderstanding it has created.

For the Oriental Orthodox this *physis* in Christ is composite (*synthetos*).

Since the beginning of the contemporary dialogue it has been argued that, for Cyril of Alexandria, and for the Oriental Orthodox, this composite nature is equivalent to Chalcedon's "person" (*hypostasis*).[20]

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[16] It is in the course of the late sixth and seventh centuries that the term 'monophysite' came into use by Chalcedonian writers. Cf. the article in this volume by Metropolitan Mor Polycarpus Aydin.

[17] Thomas FitzGerald, in his *Restoring the Unity in Faith: The Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Theological Dialogue*, describes only the followers of Eutyches as "true 'dogmatic Monophysites'": The Alexandrian monk Eutyches and his followers emphasized the unity of the divine and human in Christ in such a way that his full humanity was not preserved in the union. It appeared as though the humanity was lost through its contact with the divine (...) The Eutychians were true 'dogmatic Monophysites' because they taught that Christ's human nature was subsumed by his divine nature. In speaking of the 'one nature' of Christ, the followers of Eutyches did not properly affirm the integrity of the divine and human in the one Christ".

[18] The term 'miaphysite' (referring to the 'one (composite) nature'), on analogy with 'dyophysite' (referring to the formula 'in two natures', used in Chalcedon), has in recent years been introduced. Cf. Sebastian P. Brock, "Miaphysite, not monophysite!" *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 1 (2016): 45-54.

[19] For example, in his Epistle to John of Antioch (433), St. Cyril speaks of the two natures as he writes: For "'there is One Lord Jesus Christ' although the difference of the natures is not ignored, from both of which we say that the ineffable Union has been wrought". Cyril admitted the diophysite point, as for example in the Succensus letters, or his letters to Eulogius and Valerian of Ikonium: see articles in this book, and McGuckin's book on St. Cyril quoted above, 228. See also Hans Van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria* (Leiden/Boston: Brill 2009).

[20] See below the Agreed Statement of June 1989: "There is one composite (*synthetos*) *hypostasis* of Jesus Christ (...) who has assumed our created human nature in the act uniting it with his own uncreated divine nature, to form an inseparably and unconfused united real divine-human being, the natures being distinguished from each other in contemplation (*theoria*) only (...) The unique theandric person (*prosopon*) of Jesus Christ is one eternal *hypostasis* who has assumed human nature by the Incarnation. So we call that *hypostasis* composite, on account of the natures which are united to form one *composite* unity".

St. Cyril of Alexandria's formula must be understood as follows: "one incarnate[21] nature" (*mia physis sesarkomene*) signifies the humanity of Christ; "of God the Word" (*tou Theou Logou*) signifies the divinity of Christ. Thus we can understand that both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Christians have kept the same Christological faith, despite the difference in emphasis arising from the use of one formulation or the other (St. Cyril or Chalcedon):

> This is the mystery of the *hypostatic union* we confess in humble adoration—the real union of the divine with the human (...) The four adverbs used to qualify the mystery of the hypostatic union belong to our common tradition (...) without commingling (or confusion) (*asyngchytos*), without change (*atreptos*), without separation (*achoristos*) and without division (*adiairetos*). Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ, do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ, do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion.[22]

In 1993, the representatives of the two families of Churches reaffirmed that:

> In the light of our four unofficial consultations (1964, 1967, 1970, 1971) and our three official meetings which followed on (1985, 1989, 1990), we have understood that both families have loyally maintained the authentic Orthodox Christological doctrine, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways.

Another Christological question discussed is that of Christ's two energies and two wills (divine and human) as defined at the Third Council of Constantinople (or Sixth Ecumenical Council) in order to condemn monoenergism and monothelitism[23] as heretical.

In the Second Statement (Chambésy, September 1990) it was agreed that "the natures with their proper energies and wills are united hypostatically and naturally without confusion, without change, without division and without separation, and that they are distinguished in thought alone (*te theoria mone*)[24] (4). Both families agree that He who wills and acts is always the one *hypostasis* of the Logos incarnate (5)".[25]

In conclusion, as agreed at Chambésy in November 1993, we can state that: "Both families have always loyally maintained the authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways".

And, as written at Chambésy in September 1990:

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[21] John McGuckin and Norman Russell propose the use of incarnate or enfleshed: "One enfleshed nature (*physis*) of God the Word".

[22] Agreed Statement of the Joint Commission, St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 20-24 June 1989. See appendix for the full text.

[23] The monothelite heresy denied that Christ possessed both a divine will and a human will, FitzGerald, *Restoring the Unity in Faith*, 24.

[24] Cf. "In two natures" can be accepted "mentally" (*en theoria*), but not "in reality".

[25] See also the Statement of June 1989.

> The Orthodox agree that the Oriental Orthodox will continue to maintain their traditional Cyrillian terminology of 'one nature of the Logos incarnate' ('mia *physis* tou Theou Logou sesarkomene'), since they acknowledge the double consubstantiality of the Logos which Eutyches denied. The Orthodox also use this terminology. The Oriental Orthodox agree that the Orthodox are justified in their use of the two-natures formula, since they acknowledge that the distinction is 'in thought alone' (*te theoria mone*).[26]

This joint text of 1990 also emphasized that their mutual understanding is not restricted to Christology but rather includes the entire faith of the one undivided Church of the first centuries: "It is this common faith and continuous loyalty to the Apostolic tradition that should be the basis of our unity and communion (9)".

*3. Other Topics to Be Discussed before Reaching Unity*

Further questions—unrelated to Christology—have been raised by several theologians in the Orthodox Church and also in other Churches. These topics must be tackled and certain areas clarified for future steps of the dialogue in order to facilitate the restoration of full ecclesial communion—that is to arrive at complete unity.

Concerning the mutual recognition of saints, two in particular are not recognised by the Chalcedonians: Patriarchs Dioscorus of Alexandria (d. 454) and Severus of Antioch (d. 538). In connection with Dioscorus, the hypothesis of some historians, according to which the Council of Chalcedon condemned him for theological reasons, is not only erroneous but unfounded. The Council undertook proceedings of condemnation only because he had refused to respond to a summons explicitly extended to him three times (in keeping with the Holy Canons) to present an apologia for the events of the Council of Ephesus (449).[27] Severus of Antioch, for his part, firmly followed the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria. His doctrine was totally distinct from that of the heretic Eutyches, whom he condemned explicitly.[28]

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[26] Regarding "in thought alone" (*te theoria mone*), the natures are distinguished from each other in contemplation (*theoria*) only. The official Statement of 1990 says that Cyril correctly interpreted this use in his letter to John of Antioch and his letters to Acacius of Melitene (PG 77, 184-201) Eulogius (PG 77, 224-228) and Succensus (PG 77, 228-245). Severus states that "in two natures" can be accepted "mentally" (*en theoria*), but not "in reality" (see below the article by Metropolitan Polycarpus).

[27] See for instance articles in this volume, by Martzelos, Erickson and Metropolitan Damaskinos: the Council undertook proceedings of condemnation only because Dioscorus had refused to respond to a summons explicitly extended to him three times (in keeping with the Holy Canons) to present an apology for the events of the Council of Ephesus (449). See also Botros Sadek, "Dioscorus of Alexandria: Condemnation by Association," (Master Thesis, St. Vladimir's Seminary, 2015).

[28] As the articles in this book make clear, it is very important to read and study Severus' own writings and not just quote Church Fathers such as Maximus the Confessor. See also the doctorate thesis by John Th. Nikolopoulos, *"Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Σεβήρου Ἀντιοχείας καὶ ὁ Ὅρος τῆς Χαλκηδόνας"* (PhD Thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2002) (in Greek, not published), and the doctorate thesis by the now Metropolitan of Prussa, Elpidophoros Lambriniadis, *"Ἡ ἔναντι τῆς Δ΄ Οἰκουμενικῆς Συνόδου στάσις τοῦ Σεβήρου Ἀντιοχείας (512-518)"* (PhD Thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2000), (in Greek, not published).

What about the lifting of all condemnations (anathemas)? On the basis of their common acknowledgement (made by the representatives of both Church families) of the fact that the Councils and Fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical, both families can agree that the lifting of anathemas can be consummated by the competent synodical authorities of both sides (Statements in 1990 and 1993).[29] The mutual lifting of anathemas should be made unanimously and simultaneously by the Heads of all the Churches, through the signing of an appropriate Ecclesiastical Act.[30]

With regard to the theology and practice of the veneration of icons taught by the Council of Nicea II, or Seventh Ecumenical Council (787), this is common to both families of Churches.[31]

With regard to the liturgical questions, a subcommittee was appointed by both sides to examine the liturgical implications arising from the restoration of communion and to propose appropriate forms of concelebration (Chambésy, 1993, c).

With regard to matters relating to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, they should be left to be arranged by the respective authorities of the local Churches according to common canonical and synodical principles (Chambésy, 1993, d).

With regard to the ecclesiology of both families of Churches, this is quite similar. One specific point remains pending: the co-enumeration or recognition of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, including the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils all recognised by the Eastern Orthodox. Let us note that in the Joint Commission Agreements the representatives of the Oriental Orthodox have implicitly accepted the main dogmatic decisions adopted during the seven Ecumenical Synods (Chambésy 1990, points 1-8).[32]

As for matters such as early patristic tradition, liturgy, liturgical life, canon law, spirituality and asceticism, the two Church traditions show very great similarities.[33]

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[29] According to FitzGerald ("Towards the Reestablishment of Full Communion", *op. cit.*), during the decades following the Council of Chalcedon, some churches in both families imposed anathemas (excommunications) upon teachers from the other tradition. These anathemas also reflected the inability of each tradition to recognize the fullness of the faith expressed in teachings of the leaders of the other. In recommending the lifting of anathemas, the Joint Commission recognizes that such actions would not be unprecedented."

[30] The content of which will include acknowledgement from each side that the other one is Orthodox in all respects. The lifting of anathemas should imply: a. that restoration of full communion for both sides is to be immediately implemented; b. that no past condemnation, synodical or personal, against each other is any longer applicable; c. that a catalogue of Diptychs of the Heads of the Churches should be agreed upon to be used liturgically. See the 1993 Communiqué of Chambésy.

[31] "They are in basic agreement with the teaching and practice of the Oriental Orthodox from ancient times, long before the convening of the Council of Chalcedon" (Chambésy 1990, 8).

[32] These four Councils are not formally recognized by the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The Joint Commission has wisely sought to deal with the doctrinal affirmations expressed at these Councils rather than the more formal issue of the acceptance or rejection of particular councils. The statements affirm that the two families of Churches are in full agreement in their understanding of the historic Orthodox faith. This means that the Oriental Orthodox Churches recognize the faith of the Church as expressed in the doctrinal decisions of the councils of 451, 553, 680, and 787, although they may not formally recognize these councils as being ecumenical, FitzGerald, *Restoring the Unity in Faith*, 26.

[33] In the Athens Meeting of 2014, Metropolitan Emmanuel spoke of the common patristic and ecclesiological tradition.

One issue of the utmost importance is that of practical dialogue, including pastoral problems. Four main types of pastoral issues were mentioned (Chambésy 1990): Relations with other Christian Churches and common participation in the Ecumenical Movement [34] as well as cooperation in the propagation of our common faith and tradition; and also our social help made in common service to the world of suffering, need, injustice and conflicts, to help in case of discriminations of all kinds, and a very present necessity, that to help refugees and victims of war.

The first pastoral issue mentioned was about the relations among our two families of Churches, and our preparation for unity, for example, through an exchange of visits by our heads of Churches and prelates, priests and lay people of each one of our two families of Churches to the other; an exchange of theological professors and students among theological institutions; by attending the latter's Eucharistic worship on Sundays and feast days with clergy, people and youth in local parishes; youth ministry; by coming to bilateral agreements on the procedure of mixed couples (Chambésy 1990). Also recommended were regular meetings of the primates of our Churches, well-prepared meetings of monks from both families and all possible cooperation of our Churches at the regional level and in the Diaspora (Athens 2014).[35] At this practical level, a number of recommendations were given.[36]

In the future, to be sure, more work has to be done. The first step of dialogue is to meet and discuss face to face, without prejudice, to listen to one another and to respect each other. Two excellent examples of such dialogue are those of the Armenian Catholicos Nerses in the 12th century and the Russian Metropolitan Porphyrius Uspensky in the 19th century.[37] Their writings have not become dated and are still very valuable for the contemporary dialogue as they mention the same issues as are discussed today.

All this should be done in order to offer more complete information on the outcome of the dialogue, to inform believers more carefully and to prepare the ecclesial conscience in a responsible way for the reception of the ecclesiastical decision on the question of the restoration of ecclesial unity. This is the main task not only for the heads of Churches and the Joint Commission (appointed by the Mother Churches) as well as the Joint Subcommittees but also for the clergy, theologians and all well informed people.

There should also be production of appropriate literature explaining our common understanding of the Orthodox faith that has led us to overcome the divisions of the past, by making available publications about the dialogue and our mutual knowledge in the various languages of our Churches (Chambésy, 1993, e). For the education of all (clergy and faithful), more writings for promoting a positive dialogue need to be published, including through the internet.

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[34] For example, the two families of Churches already act as a single Orthodox family representation at the World Council of Churches (WCC).

[35] One section of this book is dedicated to practical dialogue.

[36] See the texts below.

[37] See the texts below: http://orthodoxwiki.org/Porphyrius_%28Uspensky%29_of_Chigirin (last accessed, June 2016). Uspensky's writings should be republished and translated.

For the sake of such dialogue, in order to show that the Oriental Orthodox are not monophysites but have an Orthodox faith, Christology and life, comparative studies should be developed in the future, not only in theology but also in other fields (for example in those of language, liturgy and iconography).[38]

*4. After 1993: The Present State of the Dialogue (2015)*[39]

After 1993, an Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee for the dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches took place in March 2005 at Chambésy, Geneva, but only with some Eastern Orthodox present.[40] In November 2014, a Working Group of the Joint Commission met in Athens.[41] Unfortunately the question of this bilateral dialogue was not included on the agenda of the PanOrthodox Synod in June 2016.[42]

In 2016, one may describe the situation as follows. Some groups are ready and open for dialogue and for finalizing unity.[43] Others are open for the dialogue but require that the Joint Commission (and subcommittees) continue their work of research. Some groups who are known to be opposed to ecumenical dialogue and contact attack the dialogue for fear that communion may be reestablished without keeping the Orthodox faith, canons and Orthodox Church fully intact. To answer them, I would say that of course no theological or other compromises can be made. But at the same time we must find ways to remain flexible and open-minded for the dialogue. My wish is that such people should also make positive proposals for the dialogue orally and in writing, and not merely carp at it.[44] Some may believe that schism is only the mistake or

[38] At the linguistic level, for example, the Syriac language is found in liturgical books of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch until at least the 17th century. Inscriptions in Syriac have been found in mural paintings in Greek Orthodox monasteries in Lebanon. Common prayers are found in the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches and traditions. In iconography, a strong argument is the representation by the Oriental Orthodox of Christ in illuminations, paintings and icons as a human being, which monophysites would not have accepted. In *Coptic Christology in Practice* (2008) Stephen Davies forges a new path in the study of ancient and medieval Christology, employing a range of interdisciplinary methods derived from the fields of social history, discourse theory, ritual studies, and the visual arts.

[39] Metropolitan Emmanuel of France (Adamakis), one of the two co-presidents of the Dialogue with Metropolitan Bishoy of the Coptic Orthodox Church, speaks about this in his article below.

[40] The Joint Theological Commission has to plan its work, on the one hand with reference to the reservations or criticism expressed, either justified or unjustified, on the ambiguous points in the two Agreed Theological Statements (1989, 1990) and on the other with reference to the still pending issues of the two subcommittees.

[41] See texts in this volume.

[42] A council should be convened formally to proclaim the reconciliation between the two families. Other propositions are also made (see for example Khodr and Phidas in this volume).

[43] Three local Churches from the Eastern Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Romania) and three Churches from the Oriental Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Malankara-India), have already declared their acceptance of the Agreed Statements and Proposals from the Joint Commission (Athens, 2014). The other Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches continue to study the Statements of the Commission.

[44] For example, *Lettre de la communauté monastique du Mont Athos* and "Les antichalcédoniens sont-ils orthodoxes?" (cf. Larchet, *Personne et nature*, 68). See text by Metropolitan Damaskinos in *Episkepsis* 521 (August 1995): 9-19 with answer by Mont Athos in *La Lumière du Thabor*, 47-48 (1996): 113-122. See also writings by J.-C. Larchet, for example in his book *Personne et Nature*, 69, translated in

responsibility of others. In order to counter this attitude, it is very important to pursue a new boardly-based study of history, Church history and patristics.

In the context of dialogue, we must start from the sources and analyse the texts in order to remain as objective as possible. This is the work undertaken by the authors of the articles in this volume. The reading of these articles ought to stimulate us to think about and to understand how others express their faith and also to study together and to learn more about one another. In fact, in order to move on and for the dialogue to be pursued, we must also take into consideration the whole history of the dialogue, with its progress and setbacks, analyse it and learn lessons from it. We should even make a list of all the impediments to union.

At the level of practical dialogue we must make every effort to know each other better[45] and learn henceforth how to live in harmony together at all levels (liturgical, spiritual, etc).

In the context of dialogue, we also have to take into consideration the sociological and even psychological approaches, for example, how to be self-critical.

We must try not to accuse or moralize. It is not easy to change misperceptions and overcome prejudices. It requires from us a concerted and renewed effort for metanoia or "change of heart" both individually and collectively. Hence we must look forward with a renewed vision. Differences in customs and liturgical practices, for example, need not be a barrier to unity, and existing diversities should be maintained as they enrich all the other Churches' traditions.[46] Of course, my hope is to be able to see the consummation of this bilateral dialogue. For that, much work and many prayers are still needed.

But, with time, and by living and practicing together, the Lord, who always comes and helps those who love Him, will provide us with the necessary strength.[47]

In the Joint Commission, Chambésy (September 1990), His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos exhorted the participants in his inaugural address to "work in a spirit of humility, brotherly love and mutual recognition so that 'the Lord of the Faith and Head of His Church' will guide us by the Holy Spirit on

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several languages who deplores "l'affaiblissement dogmatique qui caractérise notre époque (...) au nom d'une foi de plus en plus minimaliste de certains croyants." In English see: A Memorandum of the Sacred Community of Mount Athos (not dated), http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/mono_athos.aspx (last accessed, June 2016); and Suggestions of a Committee from the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain Athos. Concerning the Dialogue of the Orthodox with the Non-Chalcedonians, see (dated 1st of February 1994) http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/mono_athos2.aspx (last accessed, June 2016).

[45] A scholar of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church once told me that Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians quarrel because they do not know each other.

[46] Whereby the Eastern Orthodox Churches benefit from their sister Oriental Orthodox Churches and are enriched by their traditions, literature and holy rituals, liturgy and spirituality, and vice-versa. The process of restoring unity must be done in such a way that recognizes the distinctive liturgical customs, linguistic preferences, iconographic tradition, and legitimate historical character of the various ecclesial traditions (FitzGerald, *Restoring the Unity in Faith*).

[47] "Car je suis convaincu qu'avec le temps et en vivant et en nous exerçant ensemble, le Seigneur, qui toujours vient en aide pour le bien à ceux qui l'aiment, pourvoira pour nous affermir" (Ep. 113), V. Phidas, "Orthodoxie et Eglises préchalcédoniennes," *Episkepsis* 479 (1992): 20, 21.

the speedier way towards unity and communion".[48] The most important motivation for the continuation of the dialogue is the common desire to restore this ecclesial communion. Everyone in his or her own active way can contribute, also through practical dialogue.

Finally, as Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland wrote:

> Any quarrelsome theological disposition or diminished sensitivity at the prospect of restoration of ecclesial unity, when there is an official declaration of full agreement on the right faith, should be regarded as unthinkable and certainly as reflecting a false understanding of the operation of the mystery of the Church in the history of Salvation.[49]

St. Cyril of Alexandria himself wrote (in his Epistle to John of Antioch in 433) that "the dissension which then arose between the Churches was quite needless and inexcusable".[50]

*5. Articles and Texts Presented in this Book*

All the authors in this book are either Eastern Orthodox or Oriental Orthodox; they come from different Patriarchates and countries, also from the diaspora; some have participated in the official theological Dialogue. A number of articles are written by Eastern Orthodox authors on patristic, theology, canon law and proposals for the dialogue. One article speaks of the iconology and veneration of icons in the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Oriental Orthodox authors then present articles referring to their Christology, including as expressed in their liturgical texts. One section of the book is dedicated to practical bi-dialogue. In the appendices the reader can find the Statements of the official Dialogue, other official statements and texts for the theological Dialogue as well as a short chronology of the dialogue.

Finally I would like to express my sincere thanks to our authors and all the people who helped me in preparing this book, including the team of the Volos Academy for Theological Studies and its Publication House, and also Bethanie Papadopoulou who had the responsiblity of overseeing the English in all articles. I am grateful to Dr. Pantelis Kalaitzidis, the Director of the Volos Academy for accepting this work as a Volos Academy publication, and to Dr. Nikolaos Asproulis, Academic Associate of the Volos Academy for his very generous technical assistance in overseeing the whole project to fruition. In my thanks I do not forget those who encouraged me in the past years to work in different ways for this bilateral dialogue, in particular, the late Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, as well as Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia, and my spiritual father Protopresbyter Boris Bobrinskoy. My special appreciation goes to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I for his Foreword.

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[48] *Towards Unity*, 62.

[49] "The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches," *Towards Unity*, 34. In Athens, 24-25 November 2014, Metropolitan Emmanuel of France called not only for a systematic evaluation of all the theological critiques on the proposals of the Joint Commission but also for a theological defense against all prejudices and polemical arguments.

[50] See below in the appendix of this volume.

# Part I:
# Eastern Orthodox Perspectives

# The Theological Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches since 1985*

*Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland (d. 2011)*

*Steps in the Dialogue*

The dialogue between the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches began immediately after the Council of Chalcedon (451), on the initiative of some Byzantine Emperors or through concrete and direct ecclesiastical attempts at reunification. However, in the past, the Oriental Orthodox Churches were not considered as a single Church family. Consequently contacts and talks took place between the Byzantine Church and representatives of each of the Oriental Orthodox Churches separately.

In fact the initiatives of the Byzantine Emperors were considerably reduced after the Coptic and Syrian Churches organized independent and parallel hierarchies from the 6th century and the Armenian Church rejected the Council of Chalcedon. The only systematic attempt at a compromise solution to the tragic split in the ecclesiastical body of the East was made by the Emperor Heraclius (610-641) and Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople (610-638) during the period of the Persian wars. Independently of the imperial edict which imposed monothelitism (*Ekthesis*, 637) and even before this edict was issued, it had been demonstrated that there was a real possibility of rapprochement, in spite of the fact that the minimum requirement of an agreement between Patriarch Cyrus of Alexandria and the Coptic hierarchy proved insufficient (633). The Arab expansion in the Middle East and Northern Africa during the seventh century rendered impossible any systematic attempt at dialogue, since the Arabs limited ecclesiastical communication with the Church of Byzantium. Thus, the Church union initiatives of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and of the Byzantine Emperor were mainly directed towards the Armenian Church and, occasionally, towards the Oriental Orthodox Church of Syria.

The correspondence of Patriarch Photius of Constantinople with King Ashot of Armenia and with the Catholicos Zachariah of the Armenians (855-877) met with positive responses, as appears from Photius' Encyclical Epistle (867), although no substantial result ensued from the venture. The Church union initiatives of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) towards the Catholicos Gregory III (1113-1166) and the Catholicos Nerses IV (1166-1173) of the Armenians were of greater significance. The theological discussions of the Byzantine magister Theorianos (1170-1171) with the hierarchy of the Armenian Church led to substantial points of agreement, but important disagreements on jurisdictional and liturgical matters surfaced at the same time. Representatives of

* This article was originally published in *Towards Unity*, ed. C. Chaillot (Geneva, 1998), 30-34.

the Oriental Orthodox Churches had also been invited, but they declined to participate until the discussions between the Byzantine envoy and the Armenians had been completed. In the meantime, the dissolution of the Byzantine State by the Fourth Crusade (1204) and the establishment of Latin states in the East interrupted the initiatives for Church union.

Nevertheless, unofficial theological dialogue continued unceasingly in the context of the local spiritual experience shared by the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. These two families of Churches co-existed in the same geographical areas, in Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor, and each tasted of the rich fruits of the spiritual tradition of the other. This reciprocal spiritual cross-influencing of both traditions after the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451) expressed itself in characteristic ways in the realms of organization, liturgy and theology, for they were based on parallel ways of life derived from the common tradition of the first centuries.

In the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period, the character of this double theological dialogue, i.e. on the official and unofficial levels, was in fact quite peculiar. Whereas on the unofficial level good results were obtained, official initiatives to obtain restoration of Church unity by means of a systematic theological dialogue failed to produce positive results. Historically conditioned prejudices, concrete ecclesiastical circumstances and practical difficulties made the road to unity more difficult, in spite of the fact that the common roots of the spiritual experience of the believers could create a consciousness that the content of the faith in both traditions was one and the same. The extraordinarily unfavourable historical circumstances in which these Churches lived did not permit a continuous dialogue in a synodal frame. The official initiatives undertaken at the time rarely reached the appropriate synodal bodies.

In the 20$^{th}$ century, the joint meeting of the Inter-Orthodox Commission on Mount Athos in 1930 did consider the possibility of theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, but the real impulse came only from the First Pan-Orthodox Conference on Rhodes (1961). It was taken up by the Third Pan-Orthodox Conference (Chambésy 1986), as well as at many other meetings, and gave rise to a conference decree. The Ecumenical Patriarch issued a corresponding encyclical, to which the Oriental Churches sent their answers.

As the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference (Chambésy 1968) occupied itself with the relations between Orthodoxy and the other Christian Churches, it appointed a preparatory commission for dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, whose mandate was to prepare for the dialogue in accordance with the wish already expressed at the pan-Orthodox level for such a dialogue (encyclicals and replies), and the wish expressed more than once on the Oriental Orthodox side for union with Orthodoxy (e.g. at the conference of these Churches in Addis Ababa in 1965). The commission was, first of all, to draw up lists of all the questions on the Orthodox side which were in need of clarification, so that these might subsequently be dealt with by the appropriate joint theological commission in the dialogue.

Already since the 1960s there had been unofficial meetings between Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox theologians in the context of the World Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Order, at meetings in Aarhus (1964),

Bristol (1967), Geneva (1970) and Addis Ababa (1971). These meetings resulted in significant agreement on individual questions which, at the time, were discussed with a view to future dialogue. The preparatory commission meeting in Addis Ababa in 1971 concluded that preparation on the Orthodox side was sufficient. Now it was up to the Oriental Orthodox Churches to name their corresponding theological commission so that the dialogue might be conducted in a responsible manner without interruption. The theological commissions of both Churches had already appointed a joint subcommission which met in Athens in 1974 and in Addis Ababa a year later. The results of their consultations were submitted to the respective Church authorities for further decisions.

During another one-day session of the preparatory commission held at Chambésy in February 1979, the Coptic Patriarch Shenouda III paid a visit to the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This provided a further opportunity to emphasise, as both sides did, the need for a dialogue and a growing working relationship, and in the concluding communiqué it was stressed "once again" that with the naming of Oriental Orthodox representatives the official dialogue would begin: "Both sides are determined to present to each other those obstacles which have stood in the way of their working together toward communion with one another and of establishing peace in their regions".

The true and official beginning of the dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches dates back to an initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Patriarch Dimitrios, in the context of his exploratory talks with the various Orthodox local Churches to establish the agenda of the Third Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (Chambésy, 1986), charged the person drafting the agenda to make contact with the heads of the Oriental Orthodox Churches to instill some movement into the question of the dialogue.

In conversation, the Church leaders voiced their thanks for this initiative and expressed their urgent wish for an immediate start and an appropriate continuation of the dialogue. The Ecumenical Patriarch agreed to their wish and decided upon the immediate convocation of a Joint Theological Commission to be composed of representatives of all the Churches concerned.

The Official Dialogue began in Chambésy 10-15 December 1985. In my introduction to the First Plenary Session of the Joint Theological Commission, I underscored several fundamental theses to which attention must be paid in order to ensure the unhindered progress of theological dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches:

> The theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches has been prepared with enthusiasm on both sides, a fact which allows one to predict that all the hopes that we are placing in you will be fully realized. Certainly, in the relations between the two Churches, one must not overlook the objective historical difficulties or the negative repercussions of certain interpretations of facts, whether intentional or accidental. The unmistakably positive theological preconditions have cleared a terrain which looks propitious for a constructive appraisal of the perspectives of this dialogue (...)
>
> It is certain that the Joint Theological Commission will begin in a new spirit. It will look beyond the events of the past and correct the deviant interpretations of earlier generations, insofar as their arbitrariness is plain. Here I will limit myself to pointing out a few deviations

significant for the way in which history is written in both the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches:

a) The hypothesis of Western historians, according to which the Council of Chalcedon (451) condemned Dioscorus of Alexandria for theological reasons, is not only erroneous but unfounded. The Council undertook proceedings of condemnation only because he had refused to respond to a summons explicitly extended to him three times (in keeping with the Holy Canons) to present an apology for the events of the Council of Ephesus (449);

b) The hypothesis according to which the Council of Chalcedon rejected the Christological theology of Alexandria and with it the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria clearly derives from too bold an interpretation, for it was the teaching of Eutyches which the Council condemned, not the Christology of Cyril. The legitimacy of Cyril's Christology, which the Council of Ephesus (431) upheld, was not called into question at Chalcedon, and in fact the development of the Christological teaching of the Orthodox Church after the Council of Chalcedon followed more and more the positions contained in Cyril's Twelve *Anathemas*. In these positions Cyril himself noted a capacity for compromise, as he wrote in his Definition of Agreement (*Horos dialogon*) in 433;

c) The hypothesis that there was a nationalistically-motivated reaction by the Egyptians and the Syrians against the pro-Chalcedonian policies of the Byzantine Emperor oversteps the bounds of historical research and in most cases leads to an arbitrarily psychologizing view of history;

d) The hypothesis according to which the Byzantine Church was taken prisoner by the Byzantine emperor in his struggle against the "anti-Chalcedonians" is unfounded;

e) The common opinion that the relationship of the Orthodox Church to the Oriental Orthodox Churches was hostile is exaggerated. On this point, the findings of historical research are irrefutable. In reality, the spiritual contacts between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches were never broken. On the contrary, reciprocal theological influences contributed to theological developments on both sides, particularly in the areas of Christology, liturgy and iconology (...).

In 1985, this first session in Chambésy proceeded to evaluate the previous ecclesiastical and theological meetings considered as useful material for the Commission's work. A main theme, "Towards a Common Christology", and four sub-themes were adopted for the future work of the Commission.

The second meeting of the Joint Theological Commission took place at the Monastery of St. Bishoy, Egypt, in June 1989 and considered a draft text on Christological terminology drawn up by a joint theological subcommission which had met in Corinth in 1987. This second meeting published a communiqué.

The Joint Theological Commission then appointed a subcommission to study common pastoral problems and to prepare concrete suggestions for the next plenary session to be held at Chambésy in September 1990. The joint text entrusting them with their task emphasised that "our mutual understanding (...) is not restricted to Christology; but rather includes the entire Faith of the One undivided Church of the first centuries". This was received extremely positively by the Orthodox as well as by the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

Accordingly, the joint subcommission on pastoral problems met in the St. Bishoy Monastery in Egypt, January 31 to February 4, 1990. Among its recommendations were that full agreement on Christological questions as well as

on baptism be proclaimed and that theological cooperation in ecumenical relations proceed systematically with the rest of the Christian world.

The third meeting of the Joint Theological Commission was held at Chambésy, 20-23 September 1990. In the text unanimously adopted by the members of the Theological Commission, it was emphasized that the theological work of this Commission had been completed. There were no further serious and essential theological problems to be solved. The principle of mutual sensitivity with regard to the common tradition of the Fathers also meant that the practices which, in part, differ were no longer considered grounds for maintaining ecclesiastical non-communion.

The next official meeting in Chambésy in 1993 helped to evaluate the truly historic theological work of the Joint Theological Commission and to facilitate the ecclesiastical procedures necessary for the restoration of full communion, i.e. to look for the possibility of lifting all anathemas; to find the competent ecclesiastical authority from each side for the lifting of the anathemas; to find canonical procedures to lift the anathemas and to examine the canonical and liturgical consequences of the proposed full communion.

*The Understanding of the Official Theological Dialogue*

The characteristic feature of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Orthodox Churches is their common respect for the patristic tradition of the first centuries, which remains a constant and unshakeable criterion in the spiritual life of the two Churches and in their theological discussions.

The patristic tradition up to the Fourth Ecumenical Synod (451) contains all the elements of the authentic elaboration of the Apostolic tradition, in particular, the historical expressions of the teaching of the Faith, of divine worship, of ascetic spirituality, and of the life of the Church. These elements remained an invaluable spiritual heritage, even after disagreement about the Christological terminology of the decision of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451) which led to the tragic fragmentation of the unity of the ecclesiastical Body.

The severity of the historical clashes and the long period of isolation in exceptionally trying times perpetuated a spirit of theological confrontation, although it did not interrupt a common reference to the authority of the common patristic tradition to which both sides turned in order to find either the justification of their own or the refutation of the opposing position.

The distinctive formulations of the two sides on the hypostatic union of Godhead and Manhood in the Person of Christ were projected as antithetical to the teaching of the great Fathers, St. Athanasius, St. Cyril, St. Basil, St. Gregory the Theologian and the other accredited Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries. Thus, the theological problem was all too obvious and exercised both sides as a permanent stimulus for theological polemics that were directed against each other. It is certain, however, that the prolongation for many centuries of the fragmentation of the ecclesiastical Body and the establishment of parallel hierarchies during the sixth century was always regarded as an anomalous

situation in the historic realization of the mission of the Church. Although, from time to time, this brought about mutual anathemas and polemic treatises, it did not wipe out the common desire for the restoration of the unity of the Church that remained alive on both sides and continued to be fed from the common roots of patristic faith and ascetic spirituality.

After fifteen centuries of isolation, the historical value of patristic authority was confirmed by contemporary theological dialogue as the common basis for theological convergence of the two sides. Positive perspectives already emerged during the four unofficial theological meetings (1964, 1967, 1970, 1971), when the unifying power of the patristic tradition, even on the most sensitive issues of Christological terminology and ecclesiological consciousness, was fully realized. The Third Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Consultation (Chambésy 1986) described with clarity the purpose of the official theological dialogue in the light of foreseeable agreement on Christological dogma. Given the prospect of such a Christological agreement, two additional questions were raised for the consideration of the Joint Theological Commission and for the restoration of ecclesiastical unity: a) study of the issue of the possibility of mutual lifting of anathemas pronounced by both sides; and b) acceptance of the dogmatic decisions and co-enumeration of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils.

It is obvious that the official expression of the consciousness of the Third Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Consultation (Chambésy 1986) specified to a large degree the subject matter and the work of the Joint Commission for the Dialogue, which was able to study in depth, through special theological contributions and lengthy discussions, all the aspects of Christological dogma, especially with reference to points of acknowledged historical disagreements. The contributions and the work of the Joint Theological Commission proved by means of indisputable arguments that:

a) the Ancient Oriental Orthodox Churches have never accepted the heresy of monophysitism of the heresiarch Eutyches, but have from the very beginning anathematised both the heresiarch and his heresy;

b) the rejection of the Fourth Ecumenical Synod (451) was a consequence not, of course, of the condemnation of monophysitism, but of the impression that the Council of Chalcedon had turned away from the Christological teaching of the Twelve Chapters of St. Cyril of Alexandria, which had been accepted by the Third Ecumenical Council in 431 and had encouraged the crypto-Nestorianism of the Antiochian theologians Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa, who had been fierce opponents of the Christological teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria;

c) the long-lasting theological discussions that followed the Fourth Ecumenical Council perpetuated the spirit of antagonism between the Alexandrians and the Antiochians through the frivolous policies of the Byzantine Emperors, so that even the right theological rapprochements between the decision of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and the teaching of St. Cyril (the theology of the *enhypostaton*, the clarifications of the Christological terminology, etc.) did not permit the abolition of manifold confusions;

d) the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), through its dogmatic decisions, gave the authentic interpretation of the terminology of the decision of the Fourth Ecumenical Councils and excluded any of the acknowledged theological misinterpretations or confusions, but ecclesiastical fragmentation had already transpired and the restoration of ecclesiastical communion had become most difficult to achieve.

The establishment of these points concerning the causes of the division dictated the methodology of the work of the Joint Theological Commission, whose main aim was the confirmation of the full agreement of the two sides on Christological dogma. Following the exchange of special communications and the lengthy theological discussion in subcommittees and in plenary sessions, the Joint Theological Commission was able to formulate two common theological statements on the Christological issue, the first at St. Bishoy Monastery (1989) and the second at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Chambésy, 1990). Both of these Common Statements declared full theological agreement on Christological dogma. It is noteworthy that the second Common Statement expressed this agreement in terms reminiscent of the dogmatic decisions of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils (paragraphs 1-7).

This theological agreement was acclaimed officially and with enthusiasm on both sides, because it was rightly seen as the foundation of the necessary presuppositions for the promotion of the ecclesiastical procedures for the restoration of communion. Nevertheless, the two Common Statements did cover fully the two adjunct and subtle issues: (a) the mutual lifting of anathemas; (b) the common co-enumeration of the seven Ecumenical Councils. With regard to the former issue, the second Common Statement declared, following a detailed examination of the whole matter, that the lifting of the specific historic anathemas is possible, since they were not imposed because of heretical teaching. With regard to the latter issue, the same document noted, on the one hand agreement in the dogmatic decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils (paragraphs 1-7), and on the other, real difficulties in immediate co-enumeration of these Synods.

These points were confirmed at the meeting of the full Joint Theological Commission at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1993, on examination of the scholarly contributions of specialist researchers on these two issues in all their historical details and ecclesiastical implications. At the same time, it was unanimously accepted that the anathemas were not imposed because of a falling into heresy and that they could be lifted by the competent synodical authorities of both sides, and that agreement on the Orthodoxy of the decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils establishes the Unity of Faith, even though it does leave pending, for the present, the necessity of the common co-enumeration of the seven Ecumenical Councils.

The above theological observations and summarized evaluations lead us to conclude that the theological dialogue was inspired by the consciousness, on both sides, of the possibility of healing the traditional disagreements on the Christological dogma, as well as the common desire to restore ecclesiastical communion.

The tremendous importance of the conclusions of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Orthodox Churches is self-evident, if the tragic consequences of the historic past separation are evaluated in all their depth, and if the broadest perspectives, which are opened up by the restoration of ecclesiastical communion, for the witness of the Orthodoxy to the contemporary world and especially to the countries of the Middle East, Asia and Africa, are foreseen.

The ministry of the Unity of the Church is a witness to Faith, as it is constantly confessed in the Creed. Any quarrelsome theological disposition or diminished sensitivity at the prospect of restoration of ecclesial Unity, when there is an official declaration of full agreement on the right Faith, should be regarded as unthinkable and certainly as reflecting a false understanding of the operation of the mystery of the Church in the history of Salvation.

# St. Cyril of Alexandria's Miaphysite Christology and Chalcedonian Dyophysitism

*Fr. John A. McGuckin*

*The Quest for the Phronema Patrum*

The critically important phrase which St. Cyril of Alexandria uses in his early Christological doctrine: *mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene* (One enfleshed nature (*physis*) of God the Word); is one that the non-Chalcedonian (Oriental) Orthodox Churches return to with great insistence, as part of their historic position that Chalcedon 451 departed from Cyril's authentically patristic theology of the Incarnate Union (of God and Man) in Christ's own divine person. It is therefore of the utmost importance in the ongoing discussion of the separated Orthodox traditions that this Cyrilline Miaphysite teaching should be understood (by all parties): for it is something that is the common faith of both the Byzantine and the Oriental Orthodox traditions. It is the thesis of this article that the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, offering as its confession of Christological faith a synthesis of the synodical teachings from Ephesus 431 to Chalcedon 451 and Constantinople 553 (the three can never be separated in the confession of the Byzantine Orthodox, since all are regarded as the authentic exegesis of the others) is that the Miaphysite doctrine of St. Cyril is as correct as the Dyophysite doctrine of Chalcedon. That this is not a hopelessly illogical stance is explained on the basis that the term *physis* (*nature*, concrete instance of a thing) is being used by Cyril in an archaic sense, as equivalent to the term person (*hypostasis*) at Chalcedon later; and so the *mia physis* can coexist as an important (and common element of universal Christian Orthodoxy) along with the *dyo physeis*, without being logically contradictory. The implications of this will be further argued that Cyrilline Miaphysites are not necessarily Monophysites (who have largely existed between the covers of heresiology books) no more than Chalcedonian Dyophysites must be either Nestorians or deniers of the wondrous effects of the Christological Union (*henosis*). However, the article also states as its thesis that the Christological difficulties between the separated Orthodox communions do not thereby disappear by lexicological magic, as if they never existed outside the realm of semantic confusion and misunderstanding. On the contrary, the discussion will address the charge of the Oriental Orthodox that the continuing insistence on two natures after the Christological Union means that Chalcedonians do not really take on board the implications that what the Word has made one in himself (the two natures of Godhead and Humanity) cannot legitimately be spoken of, after the Union, as two.

The investigation of this ancient patristic phrase of the *mia physis*, is thus more than an exercise in historical theology. It has direct and important implications for the communion of the Orthodox Churches in fundamental ways today, as separated brothers and sisters begin to hear one another more clearly, and study the foundational texts more seriously than for many centuries past.

What is at stake is a common search for a central value for all Orthodox: namely the true exegesis of what is the *phronema patrum* or patristic mindset; and how this is manifested in synodical statements that are believed to be Ecumenical (that is of the whole Christian *Oikoumene*) precisely because these Councils themselves represent this essential *phronema* most purely. Before we get more deeply embedded in these matters let us start by considering the concrete history.

*St. Cyril and the Mia Physis Terminology*

The exegesis of the *mia physis* phrase, depends quintessentially on understanding what the great Alexandrian meant by *physis*. The precise Christological sense of a word in any patristic writer cannot be gained from a dictionary article's many nuances, rather it needs to be derived from the actual context of the ancient argument, in accordance with the 'tradition' (*paradosis*) of that writer's school. This aspect of belonging to a school of thought is clearly apparent in the ancient writers and has been deeply neglected, even scorned, by many scholarly writers in the 20th century who have preferred to imagine the ancients were like themselves—independent speculators. St. Cyril, however, tells us time and again that he sees himself, as Archbishop of Alexandria, deeply rooted in the Alexandrine school, and stands here in so far as he believes that this represents the *phronema patrum*: the mind of the Fathers. This concept is so important to Cyril that by the time he has resolved to test the issue at the great council of Ephesus in 431, he has already expended much research effort in laying out what he considers to be the lineage of the universal Church's Christology.

We can see the results of these studies in the dossier of patristic authorities he collates and presents to the conciliar Fathers at Ephesus. This is one of the earliest explicit instances in the ancient Church of presenting one's opinion in terms of its standing in patristic tradition. After Ephesus 431, the assembling of authoritative *catenae* will become a standard and classical way of doing theology. But before that time, Cyril need not be imagined as inventing the notion. Belonging to one's Church's 'tradition of the Fathers' was therefore an important aspect of clerical training. What Cyril adds to this in the Nestorian crisis, however, is that it must be a local tradition that can be shown to be in harmony with the wider thrust of patristic theology. It was his thesis that the Syrian school after Theodore had lost the right to claim this. We can, therefore, suspect the trajectory of Cyril's thought in advance, as it were, and can observe whether or not he follows the expected line. In this way also, we can supply a solid and typical context to his overall theology (*skopos*), and use this to determine those cases where ambivalence or obscurity attaches to particularities. If this method had been adopted in times past (a basic hermeneutic of coherence one would have thought, where semantic meaning is taken from the larger context of argument in the observed writings) much less nonsense would have been written about St. Cyril's theological teaching than has been the case.

A close study of the saint's writings and thoughts reveal that what he says explicitly, is true. St. Athanasius of Alexandria (296-373) is for him the major source of his incarnational thought, and serves for him as a towering, and ecumenical, authority. Cyril (378-444) is writing, however, almost a lifetime after

his Alexandrian predecessor, when new elements concerning the personal subjectivity of the Incarnate Lord have surfaced and have been sufficiently controverted as to impact his own generation. After Athanasius' great struggles with Arian Christology had begun to raise questions over the single subjectival personality of the divine Word, at the very end of his life and in the immediate generation after it, Christian theologians moved the issue of subjectivity in the Incarnate Lord to the centre stage, which it had not occupied before. The Cappadocian Fathers were involved, at this time, in setting out a resolution to the polarities of problems caused to the Nicene theology by the separate schools of Apollinaris of Laodicea (a Nicene friend but something of an embarrassment to Athanasius) and the Syrians following Theodore of Mopsuestia; namely Diodore of Tarsus and Nestorius. In the case of the latter, the problem reached directly into Cyril's lifetime. In many respects Cyril's immediate and deep seated aversion to Nestorius' Christology stems from the way he recognized it as an attack on his own Alexandrine tradition. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that Cyril's response to the Christological crisis of his own day goes beyond the letter of Athanasius, and also incorporates the larger responses of the immediately succeeding Nicene generation. In this particular case we need to ask what were his intellectual Christological sources after Athanasius?

Scrutiny of these reveals that for Christology Cyril is a close student of the work of St. Gregory the Theologian; and in exegesis (perhaps surprisingly given the family history)[1] he is a close follower of Origen of Alexandria and St. John Chrysostom. Although he undoubtedly adds his own brilliant manner of synthesizing argument, and brings to the fore of the Christological debate a hugely important macro-context (namely that all true Christology is a soteriology of deification or it is nothing) it is clear enough that he both knows the earlier tradition, and has sufficiently refined it so as to draw out a line of theological continuity (*paradosis*): who were the authors in harmony with Athanasius' intentionality, and who were those authors who missed the point entirely. Several modern scholars have accused Cyril himself of 'missing the point' by not listening to his opponents' detailed argumentation—presumably on the basis that if all could have sat down calmly around a seminar table all would have come away in agreement. But this is patently nonsensical and anachronistic. Ancient schools of thought did not work that way, any more than moderns do. Cyril knows well enough, from a very close study of the Syrian tradition of Theodore, Diodore and Nestorius, that the latter is a faithful enough exemplar of what is purporting to be a 'nationalist' school of Christianity. It is just that he refuses to allow Theodore the right to claim the status of ecumenicity. He elevates Athanasius to be a universal voice for the Christian tradition, but refuses that role to the Syrians; and this, in effect, is the projection of his theory of patristic "weight" in the voices he studies.

From this we learn two things about Cyril's use of the *mia physis* formula. The first is that he was acutely conscious of his tradition's *skopos* (overall ethos and character), that is the tendency of thought that characterized

[1] His uncle Archbishop Theophilus had involved him in the oppression of the Egyptian Origenists, in the case of the Tall Brothers, and the deposition of Chrysostom at the Synod of the Oak.

the Alexandrian-Cappadocian synthesis he had drawn up as its latest lineage, and that he can be expected to be consistent with this *skopos* from beginning to end: something that a dispassionate scholar will observe in his work. The second is that he was no fool. Some commentators have depicted him floundering in both argument and semantic: changing his tack as each new objection is placed before him. Well, he certainly was an energetic controversialist, and tailors his arguments to meet the audience on many occasions, but the great array of images and semantic *formulae* in his Christology can all be seen to resolve down to the same concern to defend two great and overriding ideas: first, that Christ is One (God the Word has made the flesh his very own); and second, that this mystery of the divine self-unification with humanity is the *energeia* of our race's salvation in so far as it deifies the assumed humanity. In other words: the assumption of flesh in the God-Man is an active paradigm for the graceful transfiguration of the mortal creature.

Whether Cyril describes the incarnation poetically in terms of the lily and its perfume, or uses his renowned strong paradoxes of juxtaposition (suffering impassibly—*apathos epathen*, or Mary *Theotokos*, or Life-giving flesh, or Death of God)[2] it all amounts to the same thing: and this overall stress on the In-homination (*enanthropesis*) of the *Logos* as the dynamic of our salvation is something Cyril never tires of returning to. Commentators, who have excessively narrowed their study of his thought to formulaic aspects of his work, have sometimes failed to see this pattern inherent in all his writings: whether controversialist or exegetical. Similarly they have largely failed to take into account that his Christology does not exist like an isolated specimen in a bell-jar. It is rooted in the great Alexandrian's Eucharistic theory, his biblical exegesis, and above all in his profound Pneumatology. Cyril's works on the Holy Sprit, the Divine Trinity, and the exegesis of the saving power of the Scriptures have been shamefully neglected as Anglophone literature has mainly rushed to comment piece-meal on the controversial issues in the style of a mid century scholastic manual. It has proved to be a very deficient methodology. Meanwhile, even now, the great Cyrilline treatises on Trinity and Pneumatology remain, untranslated, unread, misunderstood.

St. Cyril found the *mia physis* formula in the archives of the Alexandrian Archiepiscopal chancery attributed to Athanasius. In this the archivists before him were mistaken, and thus misled him. It was wrongly filed under Athanasius' title when it was a work of Apollinaris. Similarly Dioscoros of Alexandria was equally mistaken when he synodically argued at Ephesus in 449 that the phrase was found in both Athanasius and Gregory Thaumaturgos. He too had been led astray by his otherwise most excellent church archives. This history had already been laid clear by Petavius,[3] and has become commonly

[2] For a broader range of his vivid images of the Christological Union see J. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy* (Leiden: Brill, 1994, repr. 2004), 196-207; see also S. McKinion, *Words, Imagery, and the Mystery of Christ: A Reconstruction of Cyril of Alexandria's Christology* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[3] Denis Pétau (Petavius), *In Quo De Incarnatione Verbi Agitur*. Bk. 4.4.4, of the *Theologicorum Dogmatum* (Paris, 1650). Cardinal John Henry Newman abridges the argument in his "On St. Cyril's Formula: *Mia physis sesarkomene*," *Tracts Theological and Ecclesiastical* 4 (1874): 283-336.

accepted today.[4] But it was claimed even at the time by the Syrian apologists and it was after 432, when Cyril realized that they might well be correct about the provenance of the phrase, that he decided to move away from reliance on this terminology as a main spearhead of his argument; though this is not to say that he ever distanced himself from its theology. [5] After realizing it could not convince the wider scholarly world, and actually gave ammunition to his Syrian foes that he "really was" an Apollinarist in intent, he moved the emphasis in his Christology to the formula of a single *hypostasis*.[6] This in itself gives us the first real indication of what the earlier phrase's primary intellectual context was for Cyril. In short: *physis* here serves as a rough semantic equivalent to *hypostasis*.[7]

In so far as *hypostasis* connoted the notion of *hypokeimenon*—the underlying reality of a thing[8] it is clear that Cyril comes to the argument of the *mia physis* from an acutely different Christological angle to that of Apollinaris. The latter used the concept to articulate his vision of the divine enfleshment (*sarkosis*). By contrast, using the term in the Athanasian manner, Cyril wanted the phrase to exegete what was meant by a divine ensouled inhomination (*enanthropesis*). *Mia physis* thus means single concrete reality: exactly what *hypostasis* would come to mean in generally accepted Christian semantic after the time of Cyril. Unfortunately at the time Cyril was applying this sense of *physis*, the term had already become slightly archaic, for the meaning had shifted in general parlance to the concept of a particular nature: that is a set of attributes that defined a nexus of things within a *genus*. In the Christological context this

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[4] Cf. G. Voisin, *L'Apollinarianisme* (Louvain, 1901), 152, 188; H. Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule*, vol. 1 (Tubingen, 1904), 103ff.

[5] It appears in one of the last of his works: The *Quod Unus Sit Christus*. See, Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*, trans. John McGuckin (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995, [2]2001).

[6] This realization came to him after face to face discussions with moderate Oriental bishops at Ephesus. The change in conception is visible in the First and Second *Letters to Succensus* and the *Letter to Eulogius* where Cyril justifies the purposes of the *mia physis* language as insisting with great force on the singleness of divine subjectivity in Christ.

[7] Cyril of Alexandria, *Defence of the Anathemas Against the Orientals* PG 76, 401: "Thus there is only one nature (*physis*) of the Word, or *hypostasis* if you prefer, and that is the Word himself". In the *Third Letter to Nestorius* (para. 8) Cyril actually alters the *mia physis* phrase to this: "This is why all the sayings in the Gospels are to be attributed to the one *prosopon* and to the one enfleshed *hypostasis* of the Word".

[8] We must not presume at the early stage of the Cyril–Nestorius arguments that the term *hypostasis* signified psychic personality as connoted by the modern term "person"; and so we would do better being extremely careful about making that ancient-modern semantic equivalent (as is so often done carelessly in text books). Cyril uses it as a delineating term. In some of his early texts it signifies a substantive reality (equivalent to the common meaning of *physis* as "nature", and consonant with its own semantic origins from the terms *hypo* (beneath) and *stasis* (what stands), thus the literal equivalent of the Latin *sub-stantia*). But in later texts it connotes a subjective instantiation (closer to what we would mean by a person-subject). If the modern notion of personhood and subjectival action had been available at the time, the Fathers of this era would not have had such laborious work in actually creating the semantic of subjectival personhood for Western philosophy. As it was the Christological dispute is all about finding the correct new-terms (for at the end of the argument these antique philosophical terms become neologisms in the hands of the Fathers) to work in a world where personhood had so far been only an "accidental" category; and where they were intent on moving it to the category of ontological substantives, so as to bear the weight of divine confession.

sense of a "*physis*-nature" would be akin to essence (*ousia*) and mean humanity or divinity: and many of Cyril's listeners could thus hear him advocating by *mia physis* a "single hybrid nature" resulting from the Incarnation (a concept which had already been rejected widely by the 4th century Church in the form of Apollinarism); whereas in fact he was propounding the necessity of confessing the single concrete reality of the Divine Word's enfleshment. Nestorius, for example, completely failed to see Cyril's point in the *mia physis*. He thought it was simply a restatement of Apollinarism,[9] and consequently got into the habit of addressing Cyril as if he were a theological ignoramus who had either confused the natures (that is did not know the difference between creator and creature) or had confounded them (mixed them up indiscriminately so that they were no longer integrally authentic). His critique reads thus:

> You say that Christ was constituted one nature (*mia physis*) from the incorporeal and the body and was a single natural *hypostasis*[10] of the divine enfleshment (*theo-sarkoseos*). But to say this is a confusion of the two natures; a confusion which deprives the natures of their own respective *hypostases* by confounding them with one another.[11]

Cyril, however, was very far from being a simpleton. He knew the phrase was "startling", like *Theotokos* and like his favoured *aporia*[12] "He suffered impassibly" (*apathos epathen*), and he was using it in the same way, namely to stimulate deeper reflection because the startling "first reading" caused one to think out the puzzle (*aporia*). He used it in fact (just as he did the *Theotokos* title) in a similar way to the manner in which Athanasius adopted the Nicene *homoousion*, because he knew it annoyed his Syrian opponents and flushed out their tendency to speak as if Christ were two subjects.[13] He knew that the integrity of the natures in Christ was a basic given. He regarded that fact as so

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[9] When Apollinaris used the *mia physis* language he actually did mean that there was a fusion of natural properties as the divine Logos absorbed humanity into his own life. This model of divine absorption failed to do justice to the Church's theology of the divine "assumption" of humanity; and so Apollinaris usually talked about the adoption of flesh. By the *mia physis* Apollinaris meant that the adopted flesh formed "one natural reality" with the Logos; that is, that it was ontologically and naturally (*synousiomene kai symphytos*) united with him (Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea*, 257-260). As Gregory the Theologian and others pointed out this made the Incarnation a mechanical affair "under compulsion". Nothing could be further removed from Cyril's intentionality to restore the sense of divine freedom in the Incarnation seen as divine liberation of the Race.

[10] That is Nestorius notes how Cyril uses *physis* and *hypostasis* as synonyms—but thinks (wrongly) that for Cyril they are synonyms of *ousia* (essential nature) whereas they are really indicators of individuation.

[11] Nestorius, *The Theopaschites* (fragm.) preserved in Severus of Antioch, *Contra Grammaticos*. 2.32. tr. J. Lebon *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalis*, 112, 192.

[12] An *aporia* (Gr. literally a puzzle, problem, or impasse) is part of the ancient philosophical training system. It was a phrase or idea used in the construction of analytical arguments in Antiquity, a sharply problematic stating of the issue in hand, so as to make the hearer themselves have to puzzle out (and thus resolve) the deeper aspect of the arguments currently being considered. Cyril's *Twelve Anathemata* (attached to his Third letter to Nestorius) are an example of this mode of discourse: stating his theology very sharply and startlingly, so as to bring out all the deeper implications.

[13] Athanasius at first did not find the *homoousion* formula to be all that useful. He preferred identity of essence (*tautotes tes ousias*) to convey the essential point of the deity of the Logos. But when he realized the word's utility in flushing out Arian sympathies, he applied it vigorously.

simplistic that a theologian needed to go on further, to talk about the why and the how of Incarnation, not merely the what of it.[14] He would even admit that the phrase could be read in a heretical (Apollinarist) sense, but this was possible only if one deliberately omitted the key adjective "enfleshed" from its qualification of *physis;* and since that adjective was such a key element of the phrase, actually providing the very force of the *aporia*, it was equally his belief that it could be read as heretical only by a careless mind, or one with malicious intent.[15]

The *mia physis* phrase, for Cyril, does not deny that Christ is fully God and fully Man, it simply challenges the clichéd concept that these natures were something static, like possessions. In this it clashes also with the mindset of the Roman Christology, because Tertullian had (unfortunately) determined the range of key Christian Latin terms a long time before and had defined *natura* in a somewhat closed fashion as "that which was possessed by a *persona*". Cyril's phrase clashed even more severely with Syrian Christology, because the Orientals had phobically reacted against Apollinaris so much in the previous generation that they believed they now saw him everywhere they looked, and that all Christian thought had to be heavily inoculated against him. This was a major reason why Nestorius could not understand what Cyril was talking about. The fatal obscurity involved in applying *physis* in this sense of concrete instantiation, when it also connoted, in a wider range of semantic meanings, the same sense of nature as *ousia*, led to Cyril's own later preference for mono-hypostatic language in Christology. In this, the larger Church followed him. But Nestorius' inability to follow the argument here cannot be wholly blamed on Cyril's semantic, because the overall sense of his theology is clear enough from his general context apart from his *formulae*, if one had "ears to hear". Cyril uses the *mia physis* phrase, therefore, to insist that the Christ was One; that the divine Word was One both before and after his Incarnation; and that this oneness comes as a result of a dynamic mystery. In other words the Incarnation is not a chemo-physical or necessary conditioned reality, rather an exercise of God's untrammeled freedom. In particular, the affirmation of *mia physis* states that the Incarnate Word of God is one single *hypostasis*, or concrete reality: not a synthesis of different "natures" in the sense of two separate or loosely correlated *ousiai* (*naturae*).

*The Mia Physis Language in Orthodox Confession*

The actual phrase *mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*, however, is horribly mistranslated in a very wide range of English language text books, and has come to be commonly and wrongly rendered today as: *One Nature* (*physis*) *of God the Word Made Flesh*. This is not St. Cyril. This is the (English version of the) confession of Eutyches of Constantinople: *Mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomenou* (*the single nature-physis of God the Word who was made flesh*). And it

[14] Cyril of Alexandria, *Scholia on the Incarnation*, PG 75, 1385; *Second letter to Nestorius*, PG 77, 40-41.

[15] Cyril of Alexandria, *Second Letter to Succensus*, 3. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy*, 361.

is interesting to see how the semantic confusion of the 5th century continues to dog our heels as we render the critical terms across so many centuries and so many language schemes.

The English phrase "One Nature of God the Word Enfleshed", gives rise among the Byzantine Orthodox even today to the dismissive and generally erroneous understandings of the ancient Cyrilline Miaphysites (such as Dioscoros of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch) as Monophysites: that is those who teach there is only one set of natural properties in the Incarnate Lord (presumably a fusion of Godhead and Manhood, the resurrection of Apollinarist ideas). Most of what the Byzantine Church reacted to in its heresiology books about "Monophysitism" was, one has to admit, about as inaccurate [16] as the corresponding later Miaphysite understandings of what the Byzantine synodical tradition[17] had to say about the Incarnate Union (*henosis*). So much fighting in the dark. So much real-time correspondence about the core Christological matters: yet so much dissonance on the nature of synodical process (whether a council authentically expressed the patristic mind– *phronema patrum*–or not) which is the real and abiding cause of the remaining separations, at least for any open-minded, open-hearted person (for prejudice and a preference for clichéd versions of the facts remains alive in every age).

The commonly heard English version, therefore, echoes the confession of Eutyches, which caused Pope Leo of Rome to react against him (and the phrase) so violently at Ephesus 449 and Chalcedon 451; and it perhaps endures as a testimony to the deep distaste the Roman (hence western) Christological tradition had for this approach.[18] In English the proximity of the adjective "enfleshed" to the noun "Word" gives an implication of their conjunction. This is what Eutyches meant by changing Cyril's language from *sesarkomene* to *sesarkomenou*—

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[16] If, that is, we are to understand the classification of "Monophysite" as an effort to try and categorize the theology of the opponent, instead of just labeling "as opponent" those who refused the acknowledgement of Chalcedon 451 as an Ecumenical Council; that itself being sufficient offence to place them in the heresiology lists without further intellectual engagement.

[17] Chalcedon 451 and Constantinople 553.

[18] The *Tome of Leo* was assembled to bang it on the head as much as to confute Nestorianism—though the Confession of Chalcedon corrects the Leonine emphases in many respects: and accepts the *Tome*, *fundamentally as it accords with Cyril's confession of faith*, which is the more fully elaborated basis of the actual Chalcedonian *Ekthesis* and solution, and why the conciliar Fathers would not accept the *Tome* as a stand-alone confession for use in the universal Church which is what the Pope wanted at Ephesus 449 and Chalcedon 451. In short, Chalcedon unites Rome with the wider universal tradition; just as it was attempting to unite Syria and Alexandria—on the basis of the *phronema patrum*: the patristic mind. The Latin reception of Chalcedon, however, has always been one that elevates the *Tome* to the forefront and Cyril to be background and, thus, a somewhat unbalanced exegesis of the Chalcedonian settlement as a whole. The *Ekthesis* of Constantinople 553, which was meant to correct the perceived imbalance, was hardly adopted at Rome, and thus one has to admit that there are several forms of "Chalcedonianism" still operative in the Church's understanding: particularly the Byzantine one which reads the *Ekthesis* through St. Cyril, subordinating Leo's confession to that end and rephrasing Chalcedon in the form of Constantinople II; the Latin traditional reading which elevates Leo as the full exegesis of the *Ekthesis* of 451; and the later Miaphysite reading which interprets it, through the lens of Leo and finds the continuing affirmation of *two physeis* tantamount (if not to Nestorianism) then to a denial of the true impact of the Christological *Henosis*—the coming together of the two natures to be as One.

thus asserting "God the Word who is enfleshed has but one nature". But the authentic Cyrilline phrase relates the adjective "enfleshed" (*sesarkomene*) to the term "nature" (*physis*), not to "God the Word" (*theou logou*). It is therefore the *physis* that is enfleshed; that is, the Word of God has become flesh, not by turning into flesh, but by dynamically assuming humanity personally to himself, and making it his very own flesh; God the Word's own flesh. This is what is meant by saying the Word has become incarnated, remaining all the while as God in his own (*to idion*) "natural" divinity.

And therefore, to be very careful that what we assert is the authentic Cyrilline, patristic doctrine, we must correct our English version of the *mia physis* phrase to this and this only: *One Enfleshed Nature* (*physis*) *of God the Word*, (*mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*). This alone is St. Cyril. This is Orthodox—and thus for the Byzantine Orthodox also, a fully authentic exegesis of the doctrine we too sustain in Chalcedon 451. It is actually the foundation for the Byzantine Orthodox claim that: "St. Cyril's doctrine is in accord with Chalcedon 451" which we make not simply on the basis of anachronistic wishful thinking, but rather on the grounds of Cyril's own acceptance of the substantive terms of that further nuancing of the *mia physis* Christology in his re-expressing of it in mono-hypostatic language; and in his acceptance of the terms of the mutual agreement with John of Antioch in the aftermath of Ephesus in the decretal: *Let the Heavens Rejoice* of 433. These were movements which Dioscoros rejected, thus altering the overall subtlety and universal vision of Cyril's theology, and thereby causing the crisis of Ephesus 449.[19] Now this double confession of the *mia physis* and the Chalcedonian decree speaking of *dyo physeis* means we are in a somewhat confusing state because the ancient semantics were themselves in some flux at this period. But it is not a confusion of thought if one reads the Fathers carefully; especially that most careful of them, St. Cyril himself.

If we follow his lead it means the Byzantine Orthodox can, and must, confess both (Cyrilline) Miaphysitism and (Chalcedonian) Dyophysitism. How, when this looks like double-speak? Because, to the intelligent and for those interested in confessing the authentic *phronema patrum* and not just concerned with sustaining ignorant caricatures or mouthing ancient formulae they cannot understand, it is quite clear the same Father (Cyril) used the key term *physis* in two different ways in different parts of his writings. One time it signifies a concrete instantiation of something (synonymous with *hypostasis*). Another time it signifies the characteristics of a nature (a set of properties appropriate to an *ousia*). In the first application it was already something of an archaic usage by the end of the 4th century, a semantic application which was becoming too confusing to sustain in the longer run of things and in view of a newer terminology of hypostatic language was coming in the early 5th century to displace it. The term *hypostasis* itself had by the late 4th century moved away from being a synonym for nature (*physis* considered as descriptive of an essence or *ousia/substantia*) and towards a more particular use (the one recorded in St. Cyril and in Chalcedon) as a synonym for "concrete instantiation" (or what we

[19] Cyril of Alexandria, *Letter*, 39, PG 77, 173-181.

mean by person). *Physis*, in its second usage (as regards natural properties) had the weight of the pagan philosophers behind it to signify that accumulation of concrete and specific properties (physical characteristics) that went together to define an *Ousia* (*nature*). The difference between *physis* and *ousia* both connoting nature in this physical sense, would be comparable to the realm of difference between the Latin terms *substantia* and *natura*: where the first describes the defining characteristics or *hypokeimena* (underlying realities) of a thing, and the second the quality of the *genus* that distinguishes it from other things (a man from a horse or such like).

If the Greek semantic range causes us problems precisely because of the significant overlap of synonymous meanings between key terms at the period in question, we may shift it for the sake of clarity into viable Latin or English equivalences. Then we can see the issue in this way. Cyril's *mia physis* means that the Divine Word in his Incarnation is a single concrete reality (person). He has effected a union between Godhead and Humanity in his own divine person. The Greek for this is *henosis*, and it is of critical significance, for it means precisely not an association, or an enduring parallel juxtaposition, but exactly, and nothing less than, a union. As initiated and sustained by the Word himself it is thus a divine union. This massively powerful and wondrous union of Godhead and Humanity is thus irrefragable, Cyril teaches, and in that *henosis* lies the divinely initiated charism of salvation for the human race. This is why he so obsessively says (as does the patristic tradition as a whole) that "to get this union wrong" (by diluting it as Nestorius did) destroys the comprehension of the divine act of deifying the race through the mystery of the Incarnation itself. This is a more sophisticated way of expressing what St. Athanasius could put all so simply a generation earlier than Cyril: "He was made man that we might be made god".[20] What was thus a natural event for the Incarnate Lord, making the union so deeply intimate that the Word can be said to possess his own flesh, or humanity within his own single reality (*physis* or *hypostasis*), was then offered through him to the whole race as a grace of deification. The transaction of the Incarnate union therefore is both a unique event in Christ: but also a paradigm of how the race is given back life. St. Cyril never tires of repeating that this is the whole core and essence of Incarnational theology: best illustrated in the mysteries of the Eucharist where the Incarnation is lived out among his Church on the same pattern as it was lived first in his own body as energized by the Divine Word. [21]

So, a fully Orthodox confession can clearly assert (Cyril's) Miaphysite phrase and the Chalcedonian definition simultaneously. In the first we confess that the Divine Word, now Incarnate, is one single reality; a single *hypostasis* or person if we like; but also more than this, a single divine Lord who has formed a real and wondrously deifying union out of his adoption of a different nature to his own eternal Godhead, in order to give back the gift of life to the dying race of mortals. This is the real meaning of Cyril's dense but lovely Miaphysite

[20] Lit.: "For He was inhominated, then he might divinize us". *De Incarnatione* 54.3. PG 25, 192B.

[21] Further see E. Gebremedhin, *Life-Giving Blessing: An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1977).

phrase. On the other hand we can equally be (Chalcedonian) dyophysites and affirm that the Incarnate Lord has two *physeis*, even two unconfused natures or *ousiai*, but in the Incarnation made inseparably one by him, within the single divine *hypostasis* of the Word who is the sole subject of his Manhood and his Divinity unified in himself.

Is this double-speak to be at once Miaphysite and Dyophysite? Not for those who understand the patristic semantics; because in the first phrase *physis* means more or less what *hypostasis* came to mean, and still means now. And in the second affirmation, in the Chalcedonian *dyophysite* language, *physis* means no more than a set of natural attributes deductible from observation, but certainly no longer the archaic sense of 'concrete instantiation'. Thus we affirm in the Miaphysite phrase that the Incarnate Lord is a single *hypostasis-as-physis*. And in the Chalcedonian dyophysite language we affirm that the Single Lord unites two perfectly intact natures (Godhead and Humanity) which are irrefragably and mysteriously made One in the unificative energy of his own single person (*hypostasis*, *prosopon* –even *physis*–) but only as the latter term was understood in the time of the earlier Fathers, as a synonym of *hypostasis*.[22] Therefore it is by no means incompatible with Orthodoxy, rather necessary for a fuller confession of the faith, to assert the correctness of both the Cyrilline Miaphysite formula and the Chalcedonian definition: *mia physis* and *dyo-physeis*. But here we have to understand the patristic semantics properly and keep the two key issues to the fore: first that *physis* in the Miaphysite confession means "person"; secondly that the Chalcedonian dyophysite statement does not mean two natures abiding after the *henosis* in an unchanging static parallelism, but rather as inseparably united in the divine force of the unity of Christ's person.

So, is the long and large falling out between the Byzantine and Oriental Orthodox all about this simple misunderstanding of how ancient words can carry different meanings and shift in nuances over the years? Yes, partly. But something else is also at stake; and, for me at least, it still carries on today in similar, less radical, ways to the root causes of the ancient debate. There was, for example, a tendency for the Alexandrian tradition to sing the song of the Incarnation in a certain key; and a tendency for the Latin West to sing it another way; and a tendency for the 4th century Syrians to sing it in another way still. And there was a recurring desire on the part of the Byzantines (I am thinking first about Proclus of Constantinople precisely but it applies also to the Fathers of Chalcedon and Constantinople II)[23] to try and stand in between the schools to serve as a force seeking international synodical resolution towards a universally accepted Christian semantic in an age where the key terms of confession were still fluid, and where churchmen of different traditions often had little time or

[22] Of course the Chalcedonian Fathers, by the time of the 5th century, thought it best to stop using *physis* in this context because of too many confusing associations with *ousia*. Their laying aside of this archaic language therefore became a synodical sign that though it was Orthodox it was not suitable for the universal (Ecumenical) confession of the Orthodox Churches.

[23] Because it was part of the perceived vocation of the *Basileus* (King or Emperor) to foster, sustain, protect, preserve and repair a single Orthodoxy across the whole of the Empire; a vocation that was expressed through the efforts of the Constantinopolitan archiepiscopal chancery, or by the summoning of large councils by imperial *sacra*.

patience to hear one another. Have we changed all that much? Then indeed, parts of the tradition sang their song excessively and in an unbalanced way that the universal *oikoumene* found objectionable. Theodore and Diodore and Nestorius, in Cyril's thought, were stressing the distinction of the natures in Christ (*physeis* or *ousiai*) so severely that he felt they had lost sight of the core necessity of sustaining the life-giving mystery of the Incarnation, which was precisely the Word's creation of a union (*henosis*) of God and Man in himself for the sake of the race. So it was, he believed, they passed out of legitimate differentiation of local theological styles, into the domain of destructive heresy. The protection of the mystery of the union was so important, for him, it could not be allowed to be damaged by mere surface ecumenism.

But Cyril's assent to the mediations of Proclus in the decretal "Let the Heavens Rejoice" (Cyril's *Letter* 39), shows that he equally realized that John of Antioch was acceptably Orthodox—that, unlike Nestorius, he had not fatally damaged the *henosis*. What survives now as Cyril's *Letter* 39, however, is not by his hand. It is the statement first drafted by Theodoret, proposed by John of Antioch, and mediated by Proclus and then sent on for Cyril's study and eventual agreement. *Letter* 39 is hardly Cyril's own preferred way of stating the mystery of the Incarnation, therefore, but it was nevertheless his ecumenical confession that not every Antiochene, (or Latin or Byzantine, or for that matter anyone who would not use precisely the same terms and phrases as himself) was a heretic. This is why Chalcedonians can (and must) affirm the "One Enfleshed Reality (*physis*) of God the Word" with St. Cyril, and yet simultaneously, and with perfect logic affirm the: "Two sets of natural characteristics (*dyo physeis*) running together in consilience in one divine *hypostasis*," of the Chalcedonian settlement. As I have suggested earlier, this logical coherence exists for two reasons. By now the first should be obvious and need no further elaboration: the Cyrilline and Chalcedonian senses of *physis* are different. But the second reason now requires some further elaboration, and it is because Chalcedon certainly does not forget why St. Cyril found the *mia physis* was so useful and important in the first place, and that was because it correctly laid the Christological stress on the "mysterious making of One of two things that had not been one before" (Godhead and Humanity).

Now in all his arguments with Nestorius Cyril never ceased to repeat, in the face of the latter's accusations that he had "confused the two natures" of Godhead and Manhood, running them together in some sort of illegitimate fusion, that this was an utterly foolish charge against him, and a position that only a theological ignoramus could possibly adopt. He refuses to spell out in any primitive ABC that Christ has an authentic humanity and authentic deity. This he takes for granted, as do all catholic (that is universal) and apostolic Christians. It was never the real issue in the 5th century controversies. And this is why later Byzantine apologetic tradition flogging "Monophysites" has had to rely so heavily on cliché, distortion and misreading of texts. In refusing to address Nestorius' real (or rhetorical) worries that he does not know the difference between God and Man, or that he imagines the Lord Incarnate is some kind of new hybrid, neither God or Man, St. Cyril instead keeps relentlessly on to the real point of the original conflict: not that he himself does not know the

basics of physics (properties of natures) but rather that Nestorius seems to have forgotten the fundamental point of the mystery of Incarnation—because he has lost sight of what Chalcedon calls the *confluence to unity* (*henosis*) of the natural properties in the one person: the dynamic running together that is *of things which had been disparate* and which are now made one unconfusedly in the Divine Word. In the case of the Lord's Incarnation these separate things were God and Man. In our case it was the alienation of the race from divine communion. Now in Christ the reconciliation has taken place. "What God has joined together, therefore, let no human divide" henceforth.

Nestorius can only imagine this stress on unity in one way: a confusion of natural properties in the God-Man considered as hybrid being. Cyril tries to make it clear to him that this crude doctrine of mixture (*krasis*) is by no means the only putative sense applied to the Christological union, but rather that the divine *henosis* Christ accomplishes in his Incarnation (and thus his divine Passion and Resurrection which flow out of this) is the actual *energeia* of salvation. The Christological *henosis* is not, therefore, a "style" of doing incarnational theology (wherein we can allow Syrians to understate it, and Alexandrians to overstate it) but is actually a short-hand for the dynamic and divine transaction that takes place in the mystery of Incarnation so as to effect the salvation of the dying race. So when Chalcedon had to be more precise than the densely suggestive *mia physis* phrase; and had to take the Syrian and Latin worries seriously that the Alexandrians "might have" confused the natural properties in Christ (even though this was a position all the Church had definitively set aside after Apollinaris' poor efforts), this was when the Synod spelled out as an ABC to all concerned what Cyril had thought too obvious to waste much time on: that humanity and divinity are different and distinct conditions—thus there are two *physeis* in Christ, and they are not confused, mixed up, or destroyed by their coming together. This is what (and only what) the affirmation of two *physeis* means for the Orthodox.

But Chalcedon does not stop here, as if *Dyophysitism* does not also mean an affirmation of the *Henosis*. For it also goes on crucially to say (giving greater force than the *Tome* of Leo does, for example) that this alone does not express the mystery properly: it only rules out foolish extremes. For if one affirms two natures abiding in the Christ in such a way that they are distinct and separated (stuck together in a loose parallelism) this is wholly to neglect the fundamental Mystery of the God-Man's divine unification of the two. A unification (*henosis*) as St. Cyril never tired of saying is no more and no less than what it says. The natures have been made as one: united. They are now as one in the ongoing union that the Word has effected with his own humanity, a unification that he has passed on to the Church (in the mysteries such as Eucharist and baptism) as the dynamic of its deification: for what he was by nature we can become by grace. In short the Christological union is no less than the paradigm of the reconciliation of the human race. *Henosis*, in this sense, is the very synonym for Incarnation.

This understanding of the centrality of the union, corrects those (like Nestorius) whose language tends to keep on stressing separability of natural

properties. It also corrects those (like Leo in the *Tome*, who were nevertheless Orthodox) who affirmed one divine *hypostasis* as the ground of the Christological union, but carried on talking about the two natures as if they were parallel realities inside that *hypostasis*—like two belongings rattling round inside the same person who owned them both, and sometimes inhabited one of them, sometimes another. What Chalcedon meant by agreeing with Rome that the natures (*substantiae*, *naturae*; *physeis*, *ousiai*) were "unchanged", is that the natures of God and Man in Christ were not altered in their *essential identities as natures* in the Christological *henosis*. So, for example, the Lord's humanity was not changed from being authentically human in its possession by the divine Logos. Nor was the eternal deity of the Logos compromised by being united with historical time-bound life after accepting birth from the Virgin. But it is clear to all who read it that the Chalcedonian *Ekthesis* is much further down the road than the *Tome* of Leo concerning the dynamic sense of the union. The *Tome* was not in fact substantially a mid fifth century document at all. It was a pastiche made up out of the works of Tertullian and Augustine—and thus already massively archaic when it was sent over to the East, not least in the manner it approaches natures as properties possessed by persons. What Cyril had raised, however, was the concept of (human) nature as bounded potentiality capable of being offered new forms of existence (dynamics of change or redemption) not fixed vessels of being.

While insisting the natures as such were not altered or destroyed as a defining *physis*: Chalcedon certainly does not imply that the human nature was not changed. To change humanity *was the entire point of the Incarnation*. We see this most clearly if for "change in nature" (in the sense of *metamorphosis*) we substitute what the Fathers were really most interested in, namely "the healing of fallen human nature". To admit this kind of change does not mean that the essential nature (either of divinity or humanity) is altered or destroyed. Cyril thought the "change" that occurred to the divine nature in the Incarnation (not *kata physin* but *kat' oikonomian*) was its sublimely humble *kenosis* considered as an act of eternal glory, not of limitation. And the "change" that happened to the human nature was its irradiation by divine beauty and life and grace, in short its restoration: not a change *kata physin* as such, but nevertheless profoundly and ontologically a change in terms of the natural limits (*oroi*) removed from the old nature in the face of the Word's gift of immortal life; limits which had once been imposed by its collapse into corruptibility (*ptharsia*) and death.[24]

In short, the whole point of the Incarnation was that the old Adamic nature of fallen humanity needed to be healed, rescued, and restored. Therefore the adoption of humanity by the divine Word meant nothing other than the re-making of the human nature. This dynamic of change in the sense of healing is what Cyril, and Chalcedon, meant by the Christological Henosis. This Christology was not, therefore, a barren exercise in physics or mathematics (despite how it has so often and so lamentably been exegeted): but rather a song of salvific

[24] *Ptharsia* and the fall of humanity into death, because of sin and the loss of the life-giving divine vision, is the key term of Athanasius' Christology of redemption as set out in his great treatise *De Incarnatione*.

healing: how the Eternal Lord's stooping down to an earthly nature resulted in that nature being lifted up from the dust of death.

The Lord's human nature, adopted authentically by his divine self in the Incarnation, was thereby transfigured from the common status of fallen human nature into the status of none other than the human nature of the Divine Word himself: grace-filled, light-filled and restorative (all that God had once intended humanity to be). In short it became the paradigm, as the source (*arche*), of all the change that humanity can expect to receive from the gift of deifying grace through the Incarnation. So it is most important to understand that Chalcedon's refusal to admit of change or alteration in the *physeis* by no means is tantamount to a confession of two natures after the Incarnation remaining just as they were beforehand: the change however being not in the natures as such: but in the dynamic effects of the divinity permeating the mortal corruption of humanity, in order to restore it to a life-giving stasis in union with the Godhead. This is exactly what the Christological *Henosis* did for the Incarnate Lord—empowering and irradiating his authentic humanity. And this is what the Incarnation still serves to deliver to the fallen race through the Church—the ongoing effects continuing to be felt such that believers are yet passing out of old Adamic Humanity, mortal and corruptible, and into the new Humanity of the Second Adam, full of divine blessing and life.

If Chalcedonian dyophysites do not communicate that the *Ekthesis* of 451 fully affirms this wondrous mystery of the Christological Union (*Henosis*, *Tewahedo* or *Oneness* in the Ethiopian tradition) as dynamic transformation in Christ, then we have wrongly exegeted the faith of Chalcedon. Those who read Chalcedon predominantly through the lens of the *Tome* (as much Catholic and Protestant theology has done for centuries) can also be guilty of hiding the light of this synodical understanding of the "consilience to unity" under the bushel-measure of a wooden insistence on enduring authentic properties of humanity and divinity in the Incarnate Lord. But the Miaphysites are neither Apollinarists, nor Eutychians: as they have made clear on numerous occasions since the 5th century. And we ought not to keep on elevating Chalcedon and its synodical exegesis in the form of Constantinople II (553) as if it were merely a slapping down of these two heretics. It is so much more.

But Constantinople II has been largely ignored by the Western Chalcedonians, to their great disadvantage in soteriological theory. And as a clarification of the true intent of 451 it has also been overlooked in the Oriental Orthodox traditions. As a result the Byzantine Chalcedonian tradition has not been properly appreciated for the power it has to correct the wooden dyophysitism of such approaches as Leo's *Tome*, and yet meet the insistence of the Miaphysites that the whole mystery hangs on the affirmation of *henosis* as a dynamic. The critically important Chalcedonian phrase that the abiding natures (divine and human) are (after the *henosis* takes place) made known to perception (*gnorizomenon*) that is recognized by mental affirmation only,[25] does not mean

[25] The two natures thus abide in the way the intellect acknowledges them as distinct things—but now inseparably united—that is, made one. The *gnorizomenon* here is essentially the same as the "notional scrutiny" (*oson men hēken eis ennoian*) of Cyril's *First Letter to Succensus*. Chalcedon's

that they henceforth exist only in "theory" not in reality, as has often been imputed by those who have not exegeted the text carefully. It means rather that the Christian mind will always confess in Christ, the difference between his humanity and his divinity—not least because in this confession it understands why the Church worships Jesus as God, and can also witness Jesus himself bowing the knee before his Father, and addressing Him as his God. But even so, after the divine mystery of the Word making the human nature his own in such an intimate way as to be truly described as a *henosis*, there is no fruit in harping on an obvious point (that divinity is differentiated from humanity) when a great wonder is taking place before our eyes: that in his own Incarnation the Word has made the two natures inseparable (unconfusedly) as one, because this unifying power is none other than the reconciliation of the ontological faults that caused our mortal falling away from God. We confess the Union, therefore, as I have said before, not as an exercise in physics: but rather as a mystical experience of regaining immortality in Christ. It is one of the great tragedies of Chalcedonian thought that so much effort has been spent on the mathematics of a mystery, and so little on exegeting the dynamic of the "consilience to unity" that is the *energeia* of salvation in Christ.

It is this clear confession how Chalcedon corresponds faithfully with Cyrilline thought which may encourage our separated Oriental Orthodox brothers and sisters to trust us when we say that the Cyrilline mia *physis* and the Chalcedonian *Ekthesis* are really saying the same things. Given that clarification, we might be able to move on from centuries of mutual mishearing, to begin to address the really divisive theological issues that continue to divide us: not least what constitutes synodical oecumenicity, but essentially how that relates to the patristic *phronema* which we all jointly venerate.

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*Ekthesis* is disastrously exegeted if it is read (as is the longstanding Latin custom) through the lens of Leo's *Tome*. On the contrary it is accepting Leo's Tome as Orthodox, but limited. In other words the synodical *Ekthesis* stands as a corrective of Leo. Cyril himself actually provides all the fundamental elements of the Chalcedonian settlement in his *First Letter to Succensus*, 6-7, Epistle 45. PG 77, 228-237: "And so we unite the Word of God the Father to the holy flesh endowed with a rational soul, in an ineffable manner that transcends understanding, without confusion (*asynchytos*), without change (*atreptos*), and without alteration (*ametabletos*); and we thereby confess One Son and Christ and Lord. The same one God and Man. As to the manner of the Incarnation of the Only Begotten, then theoretically speaking (but only in so far as it appears to the eyes of the soul) we would admit that there are two united natures, but only one Christ and Son and Lord, the Word of God made man and made flesh".

# Severus of Antioch: an Orthodox View*

*Fr. Andrew Louth*

In November 512, during the reign of the Emperor Anastasius, there was a riot in Constantinople over the different versions of the *Trisagion*: the version customary in Constantinople—"Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us"—and the expanded version that had originated probably in Antioch, which added, before "have mercy on us", the clause "who was crucified for us". This provided Edward Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, occasion for one of his colourful accounts of Christian antagonism:

> The *Trisagion*, with and without this obnoxious addition, was chaunted in the cathedral by two adverse choirs, and, when their lungs were exhausted, they had recourse to the more solid arguments of sticks and stones: the aggressors were punished by the emperor, and defended by the patriarch; and the crown and mitre were staked on the event of this momentous quarrel.[1]

The different forms of the *Trisagion* had become emblems of those who accepted the Council of Chalcedon and those who rejected it. Fortunately, nowadays, our disagreements are conducted in a more civilized manner. But I mention this event not only to give an example of the violence with which our forefathers defended their views in the decades after Chalcedon, but also because the subject of this paper, Severus, later himself to become Patriarch of Antioch, was an eyewitness of this event, and gave an account of it in a letter that survives in a fragmentary form in a Coptic translation.[2]

Severus lived, then, in times when the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon aroused deep passions. He was, indeed, the leader of those in the East who were implacably opposed to that Council, and rejected any attempt to brush it to one side, such as the *Henotikon*, proposed by the Emperor Zeno, and still supported by the Emperor Anastasius at the time of the riot in 512. For Severus and his supporters—called "headless ones", *Akephaloi*, by their opponents, because for many years they could command the support of none of the Patriarchs—nothing less than an unequivocal condemnation of Chalcedon would suffice. Despite the fact that his writings have been preserved only in part and for the most part only in translation—mainly into Syriac—there is little doubt that Severus was the most powerful theologian of his day. Even the developments of Chalcedonian theology in the sixth and seventh centuries can only be properly understood, if one realizes the force of Severus' objections to

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[1] Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire*, chapter 47, ed. David Womersley, 3 vols (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1994), II, 966.

[2] See G. Garitte, "Fragments coptes d'une lettre de Sévère d'Antioche à Sotérichos de Césarée," *Le Muséon* 65 (1952): 185-198; also, *Letters of Severus* 118, ed. E. A. Wallis-Budge, *Patrologia Orientalis* 14: 290-291.

Chalcedon: objections that the defenders of Chalcedon in the sixth century sought to answer, and in answering provided a deeper understanding of the doctrine of Christ, outlined by the Council. The truth of this judgment about Severus' importance finds its clearest scholarly monument in the later volumes of Aloys Grillmeier's great work, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, and not simply in the pages of the second part of volume II devoted to Severus himself.[3] This raises a question that I hope to elucidate briefly in his paper: how should Severus be regarded now, in the twenty-first century, from the point of view of those who embrace Chalcedonian Orthodoxy, indeed, the Orthodoxy of the Seven Ecumenical Councils?[4]

*Severus—the Successor of St. Athanasius and St. Cyril*

First, we must try and understand Severus as he saw himself: that is, as the successor of the great Alexandrian Patriarchs, Athanasius and Cyril. More than anyone else, Severus continues to express his theology in terms of what I shall call the idiom of these two great Fathers of the Church, equally venerated by those who accept and those who reject the Council of Chalcedon. In St. Athanasius' works, his vision is expressed most succinctly in his early two-part work *Against the Nations – On the Incarnation*, and refined in his writings against the Arians, especially his three treatises, *Against the Arians*. According to St. Athanasius, man was created in the divine image so that he could come to know God, come to experience the vision of God, but in paradise man rejected God's law, and turned away from his Creator to themselves, "preferring their own interests (τὰ ἴδια) to the contemplation of the divine" (Contra Gentes 3). As a result of the fall, there was unleashed on the cosmos the destructive powers of corruption and death (φθορά and θάνατος) which began to reduce the created order to the nothingness from which it had come. Creation—and man—is rescued by the advent of the Word Himself, who comes in the form of a man, and as a man encounters and destroys the powers of corruption and death man's sin had introduced into the cosmos. This culminated in the Word Himself undergoing death, and thus overthrowing death and granting to human kind the grace of the Resurrection. This would, however, only be possible if the Word made flesh was an indivisible unity. If in any way the flesh, the humanity of Christ, could suffer *instead of* the Word of God, or merely *alongside* the Word of God, then our salvation would be frustrated, for only if the Word of God underwent suffering and death on our behalf could we be freed from death and receive the life God intended for us in the beginning. Athanasius clarifies this sense of the unity of Christ in his third *Oration against the Arians* when he says,

> Whence it was that, when the flesh suffered, the Word was not external to it; and therefore is the passion said to be His: and when He did divinely His Father's works, the flesh was not

[3] A. Grillmeier, with Theresia Hainthaler, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, vol. II/2 (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), 20-185 (Eng. trans., *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. II/2 (London: Mowbray, 1995), 21-175).

[4] See also John Behr, "Severus of Antioch: Eastern and Oriental Perspectives," in St. Nersess *Theological Review* 3 (1998): 23–35, which has an excellent bibliography in the footnotes, reprinted in this volume.

> external to Him, but in the body itself did the Lord do them (...) And thus when there was need to raise Peter's wife's mother who was sick of a fever, He stretched forth his hand humanly, but healed divinely. And in the case of the man blind from birth, human was the spittle which He gave forth from the flesh, and divinely did He open the eyes through the clay. And in the case of Lazarus, He gave forth a human voice, as man; but divinely, as God, did He raise Lazarus from the dead. These things were so done, were so manifested, because He had a body, not in appearance but in truth; and it became the Lord, in putting on human flesh, to put it on whole with its passions; that, as we say that the body was "his", so we may say that the passions of the body were His own only, even though they did not touch Him according to His divinity. If the body had been another's, to Him then would the passions have been ascribed; but if the flesh was the word's ("for the Word became flesh"), then necessarily are the passions of the flesh ascribed to him, whose flesh it is. And the one to whom the passions are ascribed, that is to say, being condemned, being scourged, suffering thirst, the cross and death, and all the other infirmities of the body, to Him also is ascribed the triumph and the grace. For this reason, too, consistently and fittingly, such passions are ascribed not to another, but to the Lord; that grace may also flow from Him, and we may become worshippers not of another, but truly worshippers of God, when we call upon none of those things that have come into being, nor any ordinary human being, but one who is true Son from God by nature, having also become man, but none the less the Lord himself and God and Saviour (*Contra Arianos* III. 32).

In none of the examples given by St. Athanasius—the healing of St. Peter's wife's mother and the raising of Lazarus—did Christ do two things, one human and one divine; rather he did one thing, which was both human and divine. This intimate union of the human and divine in Christ is necessary if we human beings are to be saved and inherit the eternal life of God, indeed be made divine, for, to quote St Athanasius again, a little further on:

> if the works of the Word's Godhead had not taken place through the flesh, human kind would not have been deified; and again, if what belongs to the flesh is not ascribed to the Word, then human kind has not been completely set free from them (*Contra Arianos* III. 33).

It is this vision that St. Cyril inherited, and that he defended against Nestorius at the synod of Ephesus. There is, with St. Cyril, the same emphasis on the unity of Christ, a unity on which depends our own contact with the divine, summed up in his appeal to Nestorius, echoed repeatedly by Severus, "Cease from dividing the natures after the union".[5] St. Athanasius, however, wrote in a period when the synod of Nicaea was still in the process of being received by the Church: his struggle for Nicaean Orthodoxy was barely accomplished when he died in 373. Only in his later writings do we find St. Athanasius summing up the teaching of Nicaea in the doctrine of the ὁμοούσιον—a point that recent scholarship has made abundantly clear—and it was only with the Council of Constantinople in 381 that the faith of Nicaea was formally received by the Church. St. Cyril, however, wrote when Orthodoxy could be defined as Nicene Orthodoxy, and he very often presents his Christology as a kind of commentary on the second clause of the creed of the synod of Nicaea, which reads:

> And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten begotten from the Father, that is from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things come to be,

[5] Cyril of Alexandria, *Liber II contra Nestorium* 8, ed. Pusey, VI (Oxford: Parker, 1875), 118, lines 29-30.

> both those in heaven and those in earth; for us humans and for our salvation He came down and became incarnate, became human, suffered and rose up on the third day, went up into the heavens, is coming to judge the living and the dead.

This falls into two parts, the first defining who the Lord Jesus Christ is—the Son of God, begotten from the Father, equal in divinity with the Father, the source of creation; the second declaring what this Lord Jesus Christ, thus defined, did—his becoming incarnate, human, his suffering and rising again, his ascension into the heavens and coming again to be our judge. But the two parts have the same subject: the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, for the creed declares our faith in God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This creed then declares, with all the weight of its œcumenical authority, that the Word of God, equal in divinity with the Father, became human, accepted human suffering and death, and manifested the power of the Resurrection; it also declares that the Word made flesh is a unity, for all the time it is speaking of the Divine Son of God, first in his eternal being (θεολογικῶς, to use the by-now established language of the Alexandrian tradition) and then in his temporal work of redemption and deification (οἰκονομικῶς). It is, I think, for this reason that St. Cyril constantly argues with Nestorius on the basis of the Nicene Creed. Later on, St. Cyril comes increasingly to characterise the unity of Christ with the phrase that he thought had the authority of St. Athanasius himself, the phrase: μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη, "one nature incarnate of God the Word", the phrase that became the rallying cry of Severus and those who followed him in his rejection of Chalcedon. The problem with this phrase was the term φύσις—a term used in a bewildering variety of ways. It could, and very often did, mean "nature", in much the way we use that term today, to characterize *what* something is. But it is clear that, though it could have this meaning for St. Cyril, it could have a meaning closer to the verb from which it is derived: φύω, to spring forth—like a plant— to come forth. The reason for thinking that St. Cyril is conscious of its verbal root is that he himself uses the verb, and quite solemnly. For instance, in his second book *Against Nestorius*, he says, as he outlines his Nicene faith: "following the confessions that have been passed down to us by the holy Fathers concerning these things, we affirm the same Word that has essentially sprung forth (φύντα) from God the Father to have come into being for us, has become incarnate and human, that is, has taken for himself a body from the holy Virgin, and made it his own"[6]: that is, it is this very *physis* derived from the Father that has become incarnate. Here, I think, lies St. Cyril's fondness for the so-called *mia physis* formula: it emphasizes not just the unity of Christ, but the rootedness of the Word Incarnate in the being of the Godhead.

*Severus and Chalcedon*

There is one thing about the Council of Chalcedon on which we must be quite clear; and that is, that among the Christians of the East, Chalcedon stood or fell in accordance with whether it was perceived to affirm or betray the

[6] Cyril of Alexandria, *Liber II contra Nestorium*, procem., ed. Pusey (Oxford: Parker, 1875), 93, lines 14-19.

teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria. When the Fathers of the Council accepted Pope Leo's letter to Flavian, his so-called "*Tome*", they exclaimed, "Cyril so taught. Eternal be the name of Cyril. Leo and Cyril taught the same thing. This is the true faith (...)" St. Cyril is, as already remarked, a Father whom all of us— both those who affirm and those who deny Chalcedon— hold in the highest reverence, and precisely for the depth of his insight into the mystery of the Incarnation. In the tradition of those who accepted Chalcedon, St. Cyril was to be called the "seal of the Fathers", ἡ σφραγὶς τῶν πατέρων.[7] Among those who rejected Chalcedon, the authority of St. Cyril is no less.

It is with this in mind that I now want to say something about Severus. As I have already suggested, Severus is to be understood as an inheritor of the tradition of St Athanasius and St. Cyril. There is the same emphasis on the unity of Christ. It is completely in the tradition of St. Athanasius—and probably consciously echoing him—that Severus says:

> For how will anyone divide the walking upon the water? For to run upon the sea is foreign to the human nature, but it is not proper to the divine nature to use bodily feet. Therefore that action is of the incarnate Word, to whom belongs at the same time divine character and humanity indivisibly.[8]

But it is St. Cyril of Alexandria whom Severus follows most closely, and it is on his profound knowledge of the great Alexandrian Father that he draws when he dismisses the attempts of Nephalius and John of Caesarea to demonstrate the faithfulness of the teaching of the Council from St. Cyril's own writings. The problem, however, about the faithfulness of Chalcedon to St. Cyril's teaching lays in the writings of St. Cyril himself. As Grillmeier has remarked, "The historical development of Cyril was in fact so ambivalent that his works could become a common arsenal for contrary Christologies depending on what one sought in them".[9] The Cyril to whom Severus was deeply committed was the Cyril of the Nestorian controversy, with his preferred phrase for characterizing the unity of Christ: μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη. It is worth noticing, however, that Severus' understanding of *physis* is the same as that outlined above in relation to St. Cyril, namely, one that emphasizes its verbal root: *physis*, then, meaning that which springs forth from its origin. This is central to Grillmeier's understanding of Severus, so there is no need to rehearse the arguments here; I can refer you to Grillmeier.[10]

However, if this is the case, then it is worth noting, too, that the most recent scholarship on the meaning of ὑπόστασις among the sixth-century Chalcedonian theologians has drawn attention to the way in which this term

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[7] See Anastasius of Sinai, *Hodegos* 7. 1. 101 (ed. Karl-Heinz Uthemann, Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca [CCSG] 8, 107).

[8] Severus, *Ep. 1 to Sergios*, translated in Iain R. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon. Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1988), 154. St. Maximus the Confessor also adopts—certainly unwittingly—Severus' interpretation of the Lord's walking on the water: *Amb.* 5: PG 91, 1049BC.

[9] A. Grillmeier in collaboration with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. II/part 2, trans. John Cawte and Pauline Allen (London: Mowbray, 1995), 23.

[10] See Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, 55f.

comes to be defined by following up the hint of the Cappadocian Fathers, especially St. Gregory of Nyssa, that ὑπόστασις is defined by its "mode of existence", τρόπος τῆς ὑπάρξεως, understood as where it has originated from[11]—virtually the same idea as Severus, following St. Cyril, used to define φύσις. It might then seem that the two ways of defining the crucial terms φύσις, on the part of St. Cyril and Severus, and ὑπόστασις, on the part of the sixth-century Chalcedonian theologians, actually converge on the same reality! This would mean, I suggest, that we have here two Christological idioms, using different technical terminology, but asserting precisely the same thing, namely that the one who owes his being to the Father (and therefore either *physis* or *hypostasis*) has taken human nature and lived and died as a human being.

*Severus: a Pre-Chalcedonian Theologian?*

So far I have sought to suggest that it is difficult for one, faithful to the tradition of St. Cyril as passed on through Chalcedon, to regard Severus as anything other than Orthodox in his theology, though his terminology is not that of Chalcedon, and that Severus will be seriously misunderstood if we try to define his terms in accordance with the usage of the Council. But I want further to suggest that it would be deeply anachronistic to attempt to understand Severus in such a way. Although Severus lived after Chalcedon, and was bitterly opposed to its Christological teaching, we should remember that synods, even Ecumenical Councils, are not to be regarded as authoritative until they have been received by the Church. The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, as I have already mentioned, was not generally regarded as authoritative until more than fifty years after it took place—until, indeed, the Council of Constantinople put its seal of approval on it in 381. If we apply a similar timescale to the period after the Council of Chalcedon, then Severus was living in a period when the final authority of Chalcedon was still in doubt, *even from the point of view of the Church that came to accept the ecumenical authority of Chalcedon*. Though he was opposed to Chalcedon, we need not take this as opposition to a synod of the Church whose reception was beyond doubt. There was still uncertainty, and there are few who would maintain that the clarifications of Chalcedon implicit in the decrees of the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, held in 553—a Council, it is worth noting, that in its condemnation of heretics made no mention of Severus—do no more than restate what was obvious in the definition of Chalcedon itself. Constantinople II affirms that the one person of the incarnate union is "the Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Holy Trinity" (canon 4), that St. Cyril's—and Severus'—favourite expression for the incarnate union—"one nature incarnate of God the Word"—has an acceptable meaning, as has the way of speaking of a union "out of two natures" (canon 8), and that the one Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory and "one of the Trinity", was "crucified in his human flesh" (canon 10): all of which Severus fought for, not to mention the condemnations of Theodore of Mopsuestia and the attacks on St. Cyril by Theodoret and Ibas of Edessa:

[11] I refer especially to the work of Brian Daley, in particular his paper given at the Oxford Patristics Conference in 2003.

condemnations that Severus would have applauded, though he might well have had reservations about the motives of the Emperor in securing these anathemas.

There is, then, a sense in which Severus may be regarded as a "pre-Chalcedonian" theologian, as was, clearly, St. Cyril. That the Church in Severus' day was still in a fluid state regarding Chalcedon is manifest in a letter of Severus' to Stephen the reader, preserved in Syriac in the sixth book of selected letters. In that letter, Severus speaks of the reading of sermons already composed—by the Fathers and others—in churches, and remarks of his own sermon in praise of St. Symeon the Stylite, whose cult was mostly in the hands of the opponents of Chalcedon, that the preface to the sermon "will be troublesome to you, inasmuch as it is not acceptable to the Byzantines [by which I take Severus to mean the Christians of Constantinople, where support for Chalcedon was strong]", and goes on to advise: "But it is easy for you to use the three or four sections which are placed at the beginning, to leave out those things which are troublesome, and to read out in connected narrative the things which remain".[12] Despite the tensions and enmity that disagreement over Chalcedon had led to, it would seem that it would be perfectly possible to hear a sermon of Severus' read out in a Chalcedonian church! Such a state of affairs only confirms the state of fluidity in the Church such as I have argued for.

*Christological Idioms*

So far I have suggested that Severus, in his Christology, represents an idiom that was established by St Athanasius and St. Cyril, an idiom that those who came to support Chalcedon would in no way reject as heretical. But what are the implications of accepting as Orthodox, even as a Father of the Church, someone we, in the Chalcedonian tradition, have been accustomed to regard as a heretic? One implication that must follow, it seems to me, is a recognition by those who follow the tradition of Severus and reject the Council of Chalcedon, that the Christological idiom introduced by that Council, if properly understood, can be equally regarded as legitimate. It is necessary to spell out a little what such mutual recognition entails. The strengths of the Cyrillian-Severan tradition seem to me to be primarily that the central term *physis* remains a term that characterized the dynamic relationship between the Father and the Son, a relationship into which we are drawn by the Incarnation and mission of the Son, as the constant parallelism maintained in St. John's Gospel between the Son's mission from the Father and the—our—apostolic mission from the Son: "as my Father has sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). The continuing strength of the anti-Chalcedonian tradition in late antiquity seems to be connected with its conviction that the Chalcedonian tradition had become abstract and philosophical.[13] But on the other hand the Chalcedonian distinction between person and nature—the significance of which only developed in the sixth

[12] *Selected Letters*, VIII.1, 441-442 (translated by C. T. R. Hayward, in Pauline Allen et al, *Severus of Antioch*, London: Routledge, 2004, 143).

[13] See the discussion of Elias' attack on St. John Damascene in my *St. John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 165-6.

century and owing a good deal to the Alexandrian tradition of Christian commentary on Aristotle in that century, in which both those who accepted Chalcedon and those who rejected it played a part—could became a metaphysical tool of considerable sophistication in hands of someone like St. Maximus the Confessor. The danger of abstraction and philosophical remoteness is genuine, but it is possible to avoid it, and still draw on the conceptual power offered by such reflection, as is evidenced in the works of St. Maximus the Confessor and St. John Damascene. Acceptance of different idioms in theology entails not only a willingness to see the strength of a theological conservative like Severus (a conservatism not in the least alien to the Byzantine tradition that accepted Chalcedon!), but also a willingness to embrace the conceptual clarity—and the metaphysical and cosmic vision that springs from this—found in someone like St. Maximus the Confessor.

*United in Song*

Severus was not only a profound theologian, defending according to his lights what was for him the true understanding of the Incarnation as taught by St. Cyril, he was also a great pastor, through his homilies and letters leading his people and those he knew to a true worship of God the Word made flesh, as well as being an ascetic. But with all this he combined the gifts of a poet, which found expression in his hymns, many of which survive in Syriac translation. In the Syriac *Octoechos*, 295 of the 365 hymns are ascribed to Severus.[14] In this he invites comparison with the later, great defender of Chalcedon, St. John Damascene, the monk of Jerusalem, to whom is ascribed the Greek *Octoechos* or *Paraklētikē*, as well as many other liturgical poems, especially in the form, new in the Damascene's day, of the canon. I want to close by quoting one of Severus' hymns in praise of the Nativity of the Lord and a couple of *troparia* from St. John's canon for the same feast, a canon written, unusually, in iambic verses. I think we shall see that these two great saints, even if they differ in the terminology they use to express their understanding of the Incarnation, are united in the songs with which they celebrate it.

First, Severus:

> The kings of Tharsis and the Isles shall bring gifts (Ps. 71:10)
> The bodily birth of Emmanuel from the Virgin Maryam
> Was not preceded by marital intercourse
> But only by the descent of the Holy Spirit,
> And the imprinted seal of virginity, preserved also after giving birth,
> Confirms this wonder that is fitting to God.
> But before one might behold and see the womb of the mother
> And call him a child who is carried and in motherly arms,
> The Magi approached entreating and urging one to behold the star,
> And to contemplate in one's heart God the Word
> Who descended and drew near from heaven,
> And to acknowledge him, one and the same, to be both terrestrial and celestial.

[14] See Pauline Allen, in Allen-Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 54.

Let us bless, worship, and praise Him as God the Saviour of the universe
And friend of humanity.[15]

And St. John Damascene:

Clearly prefigured by the bush unburned
A hallowed womb has borne in it the Word,
God mingled with a mortal form, who now
Frees Eve's unhappy womb from bitter curse
Of old Him now we mortals glorify.
A star to Magi clearly showed the Word
Who was before the sun and yet he came
To make an end of sin, in a poor cave:
You, the Compassionate, in swaddling clothes.
With joy they saw you, mortal man and Lord.[16]

[15] Witold Witakowski's translation of Hymn 8 in Allen-Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 169-70.

[16] *Troparia* for the first *Ode*, Canon of the Nativity, translated by Archimandrite Ephrem (Lash). I am grateful to the late Fr. Ephrem (1930 - 2016) for permission to use his unpublished translation.

# Severus of Antioch: Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Perspectives*

*Fr. John Behr*

Severus of Antioch (c. 465-538) is one of the key figures in the study of the development of post-Chalcedonian Christology and, consequently, also for our modern dialogue. It is with Severus' place both in history and in our contemporary theological dialogue that this paper is concerned.

In his life and work, Severus struggled against two opposing tendencies. On the one hand, his first major treatise, the *Philalethes* (c. 508-511), was written against the anonymous pro-Chalcedon *Florilegium Cyrillianum*, a list of extracts from the writings of Cyril of Alexandria attempting to demonstrate that Cyril had spoken of two natures after the union. This was then followed by his treatises[1] against the monk Nephalius (a convert from the anti-Chalcedonian side who became one of the earliest exponents of "neo-Chalcedonianism" in early sixth-century Palestine), who had attempted, more thematically, to combine dyophysite and monophysite Christology, and, about a decade later, by his work *Against the Impious Grammarian*, that is, John of Caesarea (otherwise known as John the Grammarian, who had also become a leading exponent of "neo-Chalcedonian-ism"), who was also looking for a resolution between Chalcedon and the teaching of Severus, again on the basis of Cyril. On the other hand, however, after his flight to Egypt in 518, Severus found himself in a position of having to contend against those non-Chalcedonians who, as he saw it, had misunderstood in various ways the basic Cyrillian *mia physis* Christology, that is, Julian, bishop of Halicarnassus (modern Bodrum in Turkey), with his assertion that Christ's body was incorruptible before the Resurrection, and the extreme monophysitism of Sergius the Grammarian (about whom we know nothing, neither his location nor events of his life, apart from the controversy with Severus as revealed through their correspondence).[2]

This two-sided defence, against both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian theologians, had a two-fold effect. Firstly, Severus forged, in a clear, precise and consistent manner, the terminology and expression for Cyrillian *mia physis* Christology, in a way which thereafter became standard for the non-Chalcedonian tradition. It was Severus, more than any other, who, as Lebon put it, transformed the *mia physis* formula of Cyril from a battle cry to a philosophical

* Paper presented at the 1997 Eastern Orthodox – Oriental Orthodox Symposium, published in *St. Nersess Theological Review* 3/1-2 (1998): 22-35.

[1] We don't know the exact dates, only the rough order in which they were written: the paragraph indicates that it was between the *Philalethes* (c. 508-11) and his flight to Egypt in 518.

[2] For which see Ian Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon: Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press, 1988).

formula.[3] Secondly, and perhaps unexpectedly, it was his considered attack against the Chalcedonian theologians who were tentatively trying to reclaim Cyril, that prompted the further development of what has since become known as "neo-Chalcedonian" theology.[4] Indeed, in the estimation of the Indian Father V. C. Samuel, the Christology maintained by "neo-Chalcedonianism" is essentially that worked out by Severus in his two-fold activity: "If the key role which he played in this field has not been recognized by the Chalcedonian side that is because of misunderstanding, if not of prejudice".[5]

In the last years of his life it seemed that reconciliation between the two sides was possible. In the winter of 534-535, Severus finally accepted Emperor Justinian's invitations to attend the conferences which he was hosting in Constantinople. Severus and Anthimus of Constantinople (535-536), who had just been transferred from Trebizond to Constantinople, managed to come to an agreement on the substance of Christology. However, the arrival of Pope Agapetus in Constantinople in 536, requesting Justinian's aid against the Goths, reversed the situation; Anthimus resigned the patriarchal throne and Menas was consecrated by Pope Agapetus in his place. At a synod from May to June of that year, Severus and his companions were condemned.[6] The synod was then confirmed by an edict of the Emperor on the grounds that he had fallen into both Nestorianism and Eutychianism(!),[7] his books were banned and he was banished.[8] This was followed by his condemnation, along with Dioscorus, at the Council of Constantinople in 680-681. With the help of Empress Theodora of Constantinople, Severus managed to return to Egypt, where two years later, according to Athanasius, "the Lord visited him with a light disorder, and (...) he fell asleep", joining the company of holy Fathers.[9]

Although continuously revered as a Father by the non-Chalcedonian Churches, it is only during the course of the 20th century that Severus' Christology, and his place within history, has come to be appreciated anew. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian Church historian Bolotov acknowledged that if Severus condemned Chalcedon, he did so not because he considered that the Council's phrase "in two natures" was itself heretical, as it was held by some more extreme monophysites, but because he regarded this as being a "one-sided, clumsy choice of dogmatic words" when compared to the more traditional expressions of Cyril of Alexandria.[10] The most important work

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[3] J. Lebon, "La christologie du monophysisme syrien," in A. Grillmeier and H. Brackt eds., *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, vol.1 (Würzburg: Echter Verlag 1951), 450.

[4] Cf. esp. C. Moeller, "Le chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en Orient de 451 à la fin du VI[e] siècle," in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, 669.

[5] V. C. Samuel, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," *Abba Salama*, 4 (1973): 132.

[6] For a discussion concerning the various charges raised against Severus at this synod, and later at the Council of Constantinople 680-81, cf. V. C. Samuel, "Further Studies in the Christology of Severus of Antioch," *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, 58/3-4 (1976): esp. 283-296.

[7] *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* [ACO], Schwartz, E. (Berolini et Lipsiae, 1914), 3,121, 5-9.

[8] Ibid., lines 22-27, 30-34.

[9] *Patrologia Orientalis* 4, 716.

[10] See the use of Bolotov made by N. A. Zabolotsky, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, 58/3-4 (1976): 357-386; the quotation is given on 358, fn.5.

on Severus in the early part of the 20th century was the extensive and systematic investigation of Lebon. [11] He concluded his study by asserting that the Christology of the non-Chalcedonians, as represented by Severus, was "absolutely correct and complete", and that there is no westerner "who would not accept and defend, as they do, the unity of the incarnate nature after the union, if one understands by the term 'nature' the concrete and individual reality that is otherwise designated by the term 'person'". [12] Nevertheless, despite acknowledging that Severus had carefully differentiated himself from the monophysitism of Eutyches and Sergius the Grammarian, Lebon, with a certain lack of sensitivity, continued to refer to the Christology of Severus as "monophysitism".

The most important stage of the Chalcedonian reassessment of the Christology of Severus began, of course, in 1964 with the first of four Unofficial Consultations between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian theologians, and then in 1989 with the first of three meetings of the Joint Commission. Building upon the work of earlier scholars, and with contributions now from both traditions, the theologians present began, from the first meeting, to recognize the basic unity they shared with regard to Christology, despite the various *formulae* used to express the same truth. This modern *consensus*, as was earlier anticipated by both Severus and the "neo-Chalcedonian" theologians, was grounded upon the fundamentally Cyrillian basis and perspective of each tradition.

Already by the time of the second Unofficial Consultation, discussion had progressed to the point of asking about what, given this Christological *consensus*, was the *status* of the four Councils, from Chalcedon to Second Nicaea, not regarded as Ecumenical by the non-Chalcedonians, and what should be done about the various anathemas placed by each side upon the other. A further problem arising from this concerned the delicate issue of "tradition", both in the sense that it has now become a "tradition" for the non-Chalcedonians to reject Chalcedon and for the Chalcedonians to reject those rejecting Chalcedon, but more importantly in the sense of what Zizioulas, at the third Unofficial Consultation, called "the problem of traditional minimalism"[13]: to what extent, and in what way, are the Councils of the Church part of the tradition of the Church, such that we can now reevaluate, or historically contextualize, some of their pronouncements, in order to enter into communion with other Churches who have a different historical expression, if not theological content, for their tradition? On what basis can this be done?

Whilst the issue of the meaning of "tradition" was never further addressed directly, and this is certainly beyond the scope of this paper, the resolution of the predicament involved a careful differentiation between the Council itself and the faith that it proclaimed: both Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians condemn the teaching attributed to Eutyches, but the latter do not

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[11] J. Lebon, *Le Monophysisme sévérien* (Louvain: van Linthout, 1909, repr. New York, 1978), and "La christologie du monophysisme syrien", in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, 425-580.

[12] Lebon, "La christologie du monophysisme syrien," 575.

[13] John D. Zizioulas, "Ecclesiological Issues Inherent in the Relations between Eastern Chalcedonian and Oriental Non-Chalcedonian Churches," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR] 16/1-2 (1971): 144-162.

do so on the basis of the Fourth Council; both sides have continued in the same faith, but differ in their acceptance or rejection of certain Councils, indeed, for both of them to maintain the same faith, historical circumstances have required them to speak in different terms.[14] It is in this sense that section 8 of the Second Agreed Statement, issued in 1990, stated:

> Both families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils, which form our common heritage. In relation to the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox state that for them the above points 1-7 [the kernel of the agreed Christological position - JB] are the teachings also of the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, while the Oriental Orthodox consider this statement of the Orthodox as their interpretation. With this understanding, the Oriental Orthodox respond to it positively.[15]

That is, the four later Councils are regarded by the Eastern Orthodox Church as an interpretation of the faith of the first three Councils, which, while not adding anything to that common faith, nevertheless clarify certain points in response to particular developments within the Chalcedonian Church. As these developments were not necessarily paralleled within the non-Chalcedonian Churches, the acceptance of these later Councils is not required of the Oriental Orthodox, yet they respond favourably towards them. On the basis of this, the Agreed Statement then goes on to propose that the anathemas and condemnations against each other should be lifted, "on the basis that the Councils and fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical". (Section 10).

The point of this digression into the conclusions of the Unofficial and Official dialogues is not to comment on them themselves—this is the topic for others more competent than myself—but to set the context for discussing a particular aspect of the Christology of Severus. Whilst the issues addressed by the Council of Constantinople in 680-681 may be particular to the Chalcedonian tradition, and as such may not need to be formally recognized by the non-Chalcedonian Churches, the question must be asked whether the theology which it affirms, that of the reality of a human will and energy together with the divine will and energy in Christ, is indeed also affirmed, at least implicitly, by those traditions which stand outside of this development?

Already in response to the first Unofficial Consultation, this question was raised by Trembelas and Verhovskey.[16] However apart from one paper giving a brief historical survey of the Monothelite controversy,[17] this issue was never fully addressed. Nevertheless, in the Second Agreed Statement of the Joint Commission, it is asserted that both families affirm that the Hypostasis of the Logos became composite (σύνθετος), by uniting to His divine nature, with its natural

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[14] Cf. esp. Gerasimos Konidaris, "The Inner Continuity and Coherence of the Trinitarian and Christological Dogma in the Seven Ecumenical Councils", GOTR 13/2 (1968): 263-73, and K. N. Khella, "Do the Four Later Councils Prevent Reconciliation by the Orthodox Churches?", ibid., 278-82; and the later reflection by P. Verghese, "Ecclesiological Issues Concerning the Relation of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches," GOTR 16/1-2 (1971): 133-143.

[15] Text given in *St. Nersess Theological Review* 1:1 (1996): 106.

[16] Cf. Met. Emilianos, "From Aarhus to Bristol," and P. N. Trembelas, "Some Observations on the Aarhus Consultations," GOTR 13/2 (1968): 137-142, 143-147.

[17] P. Verghese, "The Monothelite Controversy. A Historical Survey," GOTR 13/2 (1968): 196-208.

will and energy, a created human nature with its natural will and energy; that these are united hypostatically, without confusion, change, division or separation, but distinguished in thought alone (en theoria mone); and that it is the Hypostasis of the Logos incarnate who alone wills and acts (sections 3-5). This certainly reflects the Christology of Severus as it is presented by the non-Chalcedonian theologians, in particular V.C. Samuel, but, it must be admitted that this does not reflect his Christology as it is presented in the standard Orthodox textbooks on the subject nor by the latest tome in the already voluminous work Christ in Christian Tradition by A. Grillmeier. The late Fr. John Meyendorff, in his book Christ in Eastern Christian Thought, presented Severus as being a forerunner of monoenergism, thereby casting a doubt on his teaching concerning the reality of the human nature of Christ.[18] Grillmeier goes even further: "Without a doubt Severus already contributes to the monoenergist, monothelite controversy of the seventh century". For this particular "slant" of Severus, Grillmeier spurns Severus as offering "little help in constructing a modern Christology with a stronger appreciation of the uncurtailed humanity of Christ".[19] By this expression, Grillmeier seems to demand a Christology in which the human will of Christ is seen as spontaneous and autonomous, a "principle of choosing which functions by itself", and, ultimately, possessing itsown consciousness.[20]

Grillmeier's presuppositions about what constitutes an adequate Christology are all too clear from his comments. However, this acknowledgment does not soften the fact that such works now form the basic textbooks introducing students to the Christology of Severus and others. As such, and as a very practical contribution towards reconciliation and mutual understanding, it is incumbent on scholars of both traditions to investigate such issues thoroughly and to produce satisfactory, and recognized, textbooks establishing their position.

The suspicion that there might be a possible implicit monoenergism in the Christology of Severus seems, in fact, to be based on a misunderstanding parallel to that of earlier accusations of his "monophysitism". In giving a brief sketch of how this is so, there is one further issue that I would like to raise, concerning the identity of the *hypostasis* of Christ in Severus' Christology and in "neo-Chalcedonian" Christology.

For Severus, the term ousia, essence, applies to that which is common or generic, and *hypostasis* to that which is particular, while *physis*, nature, can apply to either: inclusively, for instance, to all mankind, or particularly to one individual human being.[21] The ousia of a being is not simply an abstraction, it is real: it is what a particular being is; but it does not, however, have concrete existence in or of itself—for everything concrete is particular. The ousia is, as it were, the reality which is particularized or individuated as particular, individual

[18] John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (rev. ed. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975), 43.

[19] A. Grillmeier with T. Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, pt. 2, *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century* (London: Mowbray, 1995), 149, my emphasis.

[20] Cf. Ibid., 152, 168-9.

[21] Cf. Ep. 5, PO 12, 195-6.

objects or hypostases. With regard to the final important term in Christology, prosopon, Severus gives it a slightly different emphasis than *hypostasis*: while the individuated ousia, the *hypostasis*, represents the internal reality of a particular object, the prosopon designates its external aspect.[22]

One final distinction must be drawn for a proper understanding of Severus' Christology: that is, the distinction between a "simple" and a "composite" *hypostasis*.[23] As an example of a simple *hypostasis*, Severus gives the three Persons of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and as an example of a composite *hypostasis*, a human being, such as Peter or John, who are composed of body and soul. In a human being, the ousia of the body and the ousia of the soul, as generic realities, are individuated together in a union of both, while each remaining what they are according to their own principle. However, it is not simply as two ousiai that the body and soul are brought together in union, but rather as hypostases—that is, as individuated ousiai, but ousiai which have been individuated by one and the same unifying act:

> The body and the soul of which a man is composed, each of them preserves its *hypostasis*, without either being confused with, or changed over into, the other. Since, however, they have come into concrete existence in composition and not separately, to neither of them can a distinct prosopon be assigned.[24]

The body of a particular man has never, and never will, exist outside of the union with the soul, the union in which both *ousiai* are particularized or concretized; the body is not what Severus describes as a "self-subsistent" (ἰδιοσύστατος) *hypostasis*, as are simple hypostases, such as the Father and the Holy Spirit, who exist in their own right.[25] Only in and through this union does the composite *hypostasis* of man acquire a *prosopon*. If the body had come into existence by itself, it would be a simple self-subsisting *hypostasis* or nature, with its own *prosopon*.

A human being then, as a "composite *hypostasis*", or alternatively a "composite nature", is the result of the union of two individuated *ousiai*, and as such can be described as being "from two natures" or "from two hypostases". But as these two *ousiai* are individuated together, through the same union, resulting in one and the same *prosopon*, a human being cannot be said to be "*in* two natures" or "hypostases". This, for Severus, is the essential characteristic of the hypostatic or natural union:

> the particularity of the natural union is that the hypostases are in composition and are perfect without diminution, but refuse to continue in an individual existence so as to be numbered two and to have its own prosopon impressed upon each of them (...)[26]

A natural of hypostatic union of two natures or hypostases results in a composite nature or *hypostasis*, with its own *prosopon*; although the individuated

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[22] Cf. Samuel, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch", 136.

[23] Cf. *Contra impium* Grammaticum, *Or*. II. 4, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* [CSCO] 111, 76-77.

[24] Ibid., cited in Samuel, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," 136.

[25] Cf. Ep. 2, PO 12, 189-190.

[26] Ep. 15, PO 12, 210.

*ousiai* remain undiminished and fully real, they can no longer be counted as two—they only exist in the one unity. The duality can be perceived, according to Severus, like most post-Chalcedonian Christology, in thought alone (*en theoria mone*).[27] In contrast to this natural or hypostatic union, a *prosopic* union results in no more than a union of love or association between two self-subsisting hypostases, each with their own *prosopa*—for example the fellowship in apostleship of Peter and Paul.[28]

Building upon such analyses, Severus presents his Christology in the following terms[29]: when the simple *hypostasis* of the Word of God, who is before all things, united manhood to himself, it is not possible that a specific *prosopon* could be ascribed to neither the Godhead of the Word nor to the manhood which is united unchangeably to the Word. Both the Godhead and the manhood are only perceived in their composition, not as having concrete existence apart from each other. It is by the coming together, in a natural or hypostatic union, of the Godhead and manhood, each remaining without change or diminution, that the one composite *hypostasis* of the incarnate Word receives His *prosopon*. As Severus writes in Ep.15:

> For those hypostases or natures, being in composition without diminution, and not existing separately and in individual existence, make up one *prosopon* of the one Lord and Christ and Son, and the one incarnate nature leveled and *hypostasis* of the Word.[30]

The "one" of the Cyrillian *mia physis* formula cannot, for Severus, any more than it can for Cyril himself,[31] be separated from the qualifying term, "incarnate". It is a unity of two natures, or, for Severus, two hypostases, which results, not in their undifferentiated merger, but in the "one incarnate nature", or the one composite nature or *hypostasis*.

That Severus speaks quite plainly of the union "from two hypostases", is probably what gave occasion to the charge levelled at him by Justinian— that he has fallen, somehow, into the opposite errors of Nestorianism and Eutychianism. It is interesting to note that a similar charge of "sounding Nestorian" was made by Romanides in response to Samuel's papers presenting the Christology of Severus at the Unofficial Consultations in Aarhus and Bristol.[32] For those not familiar with the particularities of Severus language, it must indeed seem so.

However, a further, more important, issue was raised by V.C. Samuel in his subsequent publications, to which I alluded earlier: the question concerning the identity of the *hypostasis* of Christ in Severan and "neo-Chalcedonian" Christology. Samuel is emphatic that Severus draws a clear distinction between the *hypostasis* of the Word of God and the *hypostasis* of Christ: "the *hypostasis* of

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[27] In Lebon's somewhat extreme estimation this implies that there the distinction is merely a "creation of the intellect," rather than a reality in the object itself. "La Christologie du monophysisme syrien," 500.

[28] Cf. Ep. 2, PO 12, 189-190.

[29] Cf. Samuel, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," 137.

[30] PO 12, 210; Ep. 15.

[31] Cf. esp. Ep. 46.4 (the *Second letter to Succensus*), cited by Severus, to demonstrate this point, in Ep. 2, PO 12, 193.

[32] Cf. GOTR 10/4 (1964-65): 52, and 13/2 (1968): 166-167.

Christ is not simply the *hypostasis* of God the Son, but it is the *hypostasis* of God the Son in His incarnate state",[33] that is, it is the composite *hypostasis* formed from the union between God and man in the Incarnation. Severus states his position emphatically:

> The natures and the hypostases, of which He has been composed, are perceived irreducibly and unchangeably in the union. But it is not possible to recognize a *prosopon* for each of them, because they did not come into being dividedly either in specific concretion or in duality. For He is one *hypostasis* from both, and one *prosopon* conjointly, and one nature of God the Word incarnate.[34]

In asserting that "they did not come into being dividedly", so that one cannot recognize a *prosopon* for each separately, Severus is clearly not denying the eternality of the Word of God: what he is insisting upon, however, is that the one composite *hypostasis* of Christ, with its one *prosopon*, is the result of the union, the Incarnation.

In the Second Agreed Statement, it is affirmed that both families agree that "the *Hypostasis* of the Logos became composite (*synthetos*)" as a result of the Incarnation, and that it is the "one *Hypostasis* of the Logos incarnate" who alone wills and acts (section 4, 5)—statements which fully accord with Severus' position. However, the basic axiom in modern Orthodox presentations of "neo-Chalcedonian" Christology is the complete identification of the *hypostasis* of union with the pre-existent *hypostasis* of the Word.[35] This is, of course, worked out through the doctrine of the *enhypostasia*: the Word of God, at the Incarnation, assumed human nature or *ousia*, which was without its own *hypostasis*, and gave it His own *hypostasis*, "hypostatizing human nature into His own *hypostasis*".[36] Although John of Damascus, when discussing the hypostatic union, refers in passing to the union of the two natures "in one composite *hypostasis*",[37] it is more characteristic of the post-Chalcedonian writers to deny the very possibility of a composite *hypostasis*, and to speak instead of the "properties" of the *hypostasis* of the Word as becoming more composite through the Incarnation: of the three Persons of the Trinity, the Word alone is now visible and palpable.[38]

Fr. V. C. Samuel raises certain questions concerning this theory of *enhypostasia* as viewed from a Severan perspective[39]: firstly, does it ensure

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[33] "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," 168.

[34] *Contra impium* Grammaticum, *Or. II.* 22, CSCO 111, 187; following the translation of Samuel, "The Christology of Severus", 168.

[35] Cf. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 73.

[36] As expressed by Leontius of Jerusalem, cf. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*, 74. It is perhaps pertinent to note that this understanding of "enhypostasis", stemming from the work of F. Loofs, and popularized by H. Relton, has in recent years, particularly through the work of B. Daley, been increasingly seen as a misunderstanding of the patristic texts. For discussion and references, cf. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol.2, pt.2.

[37] *Ex. fidei*, 47; III.3, ed. Kotter (Berlin, 1973), 114-115.

[38] Cf. Leontius of Jerusalem: "The natures were not composed in mixing; there is also no composite hypostasis, because it is not from hypostases; rather the *idioma* of the hypostasis of the Logos becomes more composite." PG 86, 1485D 4-7; following the emended text proposed by C. Moeller, "Textes 'monophysites' de Léonce de Jérusalem," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, 27 (1951): 474, fn.18.

[39] Cf. "Further Studies in the Christology of Severus of Antioch," 290-291.

anything more than the mere presence of an abstract human nature in Christ? And secondly, if human nature is incapable of existing by itself without its own *hypostasis*, does its subsistence in the *hypostasis* of the Word of God, who is beyond all the spatial and temporal limitations of the created world, actually make Jesus Christ a concrete reality in this world? If one really accepts what is implied by the theory of *enhypostasia*, could Jesus Christ have lived in this world at all?

Clearly these are serious questions, which it is beyond the scope of this presentation to resolve. It is possible that the problem might simply be due to continued terminological misunderstandings, or, alternatively, that it is the result of different ways of expressing the same truth. Yet the issues raised cannot be ignored.

Returning to the question of a possible latent monoenergism in the Christology of Severus, I have mentioned how Severus emphatically affirms the unimpaired continuity of the two realities out of which the one *hypostasis* of Christ is composed. It is in this sense that Severus can affirm that Jesus Christ had both a human will and a human energy, although they are no more self-subsistent than His human *hypostasis*: they exist within, and are operated by, the one composite *hypostasis* of Christ. Using his favoured analogy, Severus explains how while a composite human being does some things which are intellectual and some that are sensible and bodily, yet it is, nevertheless, the same man who acts in both: one does not say that the body of Peter eats, if by that one means that his body eats somehow apart from Peter himself, nor that his mind prays—it is Peter himself who eats and prays. Similarly, Severus explains:

> One can see the same in the case of Emmanuel. For there is one who acts, that is the Word of God incarnate; and there is one active movement which is activity, but the things which are done are diverse, that is, (the things) accomplished by activity (...) And just as no-one divides the Word from the flesh, so also it is impossible to divide or separate these activities.[40]

Severus is clearly concerned to exclude the possibility, which he sees in the *Tome* of Leo, which he cites several times, of the natures acting of themselves.[41] There are certainly, according to Severus, two types of activity, yet it is one and the same who works both:

> Between the things performed and done by the one Christ, the difference is great. Some of the acts are befitting the divinity, while the others are human (...) Yet the one Word performed the latter and the former (...) Because the things performed are different, we shall [not however] on this account rightly define two natures or forms as operating.[42]

This difference between the activities appropriate to each nature is simply a consequence of the fact that the two natures united are radically different: uncreated and created. Yet while the difference in the properties of the natures remains, the natures have nevertheless been united without confusion or

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[40] *Ep. 1 ad Sergium*, CSCO 119, 83; translation in I. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1988), 153.

[41] Cf. Ibid., 84; trans. 154; Ep. 1, PO 12, 182-184.

[42] Ep. 1, PO 12, 181-182.

division. As such, Severus is able to embrace fully the principle of *communicatio idiomatum* (or interchange of properties):

> When a hypostatic union is confessed, of which the fulfilment is that from the two natures there is one Christ without confusion, one *prosopon*, one *hypostasis*, one nature belonging to the Word Incarnate, the Word is known by means of the properties of the flesh, (...) and again the properties of the Word will be acknowledged as the properties of the flesh, and the same One will be seen by means of both [sets of properties].[43]

In this union without confusion, the properties and faculties distinguishing each nature are preserved, yet united without division, and are employed by one and the same Christ, the Word Incarnate. The human nature of Christ is not reduced to a merely passive instrument used by the Word in His work of salvation, for it is in, through and as a human being, endowed with will and reason, that the Word Incarnate effects our salvation.[44]

I hope that in this paper I have managed to convey something of the importance of Severus of Antioch, both within the historical contexts of his own times and our own times, and in terms of his contribution to the development of Christology, both non-Chalcedonian and Chalcedonian. It is clear, from the various Unofficial and Official Agreed Statements, that real progress has been made towards a genuine theological consensus. I hope that I have also made it clear that such statements do not, however, lessen the need to return to the sources of our theology, to study them ever more diligently and to produce the basic textbooks that are sorely needed if we are to overcome the "slanted" way in which much of patristic theology has been presented, and so also to continue to work towards increased mutual understanding.

[43] *Ep. 1 ad Sergium*, 79; trans. 151.

[44] Cf. *Ep. 1 ad Sergium*, 85, trans. 154; Hom. 83, PO 20, 415-417: "the Word of God is united hypostatically not only to flesh, but also to a soul endowed with will and reason, for the purpose of making our souls bent towards sinfulness incline towards the choice of good and the aversion to evil".

# The Cyrillian Character of the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith

*Georgios D. Martzelos*

*Introduction*

While modern theologians have dealt extensively with the problem of the sources of the Definition of Chalcedon,[1] there has not yet been a completely satisfactory solution to this problem, so as to respond to the questions arising from the research of the historico-dogmatic framework of its genesis at the Council of Chalcedon. For this reason most researchers, the majority being of the Roman-Catholic faith, speak of four or even more, mostly heterogeneous, sources of the Chalcedonian Definition, so that they essentially deny the inner cohesion and unity of its Christological elements and consider it as a dogmatic text which synthesises, basically without any coherence, the different or opposite Christological traditions of the 5th century in East and West.[2] It's rather an exception that fifty years ago two Roman-Catholic theologians, Th. Šagi-Bunić and A. de Halleux, in their research of the sources of the Chalcedonian Definition actually discovered the inner cohesion and unity of its Christological elements, pointing out its inner relation to the Christology of St. Cyril.[3]

But despite the fact that recent research constantly discovers the homogeneity of the Christological elements of the Chalcedonian Definition and increasingly stresses its Cyrillian character, we have to emphasize that even up until today the problem of its sources has not been investigated, as much as it should have been, in the historical and theological framework of its generation, but more or less as a philological problem, namely as a problem we have to

[1] On this point the following explanation is required: When we speak of the Definition of Chalcedon, we mean only the very Christological part of the Definition and not of course the whole text of it. Therefore, what is meant is only the part that some older researchers have called the "symbol of Chalcedon" (See for example I. Ortiz de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon. Sein Text, sein Werden, seine dogmatische Bedeutung", in: *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, Bd. I (Würzburg: Echterverlag, [4]1973), 389ff.; Herman M. Diepen, *Les trois Chapitres au Concile de Chalcédoine. Une étude de la Christologie de l'Anatolie ancienne* (Oosterhout: Editions de St. Michel, 1953), 107ff.).

[2] See M. Richard, "L'introduction du mot 'hypostase' dans la théologie de l'Incarnation," *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 2 (1945): 267ff.; I. Ortiz de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon," 398, 400; P. Th. Camelot, "Théologies grecques et théologie latine à Chalcédoine," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 35 (1951), 402ff.; idem, *Éphèse et Chalcédoine*, in the series *Histoire des Conciles Œcuméniques*, 2 (1962): 139ff.; Diepen, *Les trois Chapitres au Concile de Chalcédoine*, 109ff.; R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon. A historical and doctrinal survey* (London: SPCK, [2]1961), 211ff.; J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London [2]1960), 340f.; F. Hebart, *Zur Struktur der altkirchlichen Christologie. Studien zur Vorgeschichte des Chalcedonense*, Bd. II (Heidelberg, 1973), 636.

[3] See Th. Šagi-Bunić, "'Duo perfecta' et 'duae naturae' in definitione dogmatica chalcedonensi," *Laurentianum* 5 (1964): 203ff.; ibid., *'Deus perfectus et homo perfectus' a Concilio Ephesino (a. 431) ad Chalcedonense (a. 451)* (Romae-Friburgi Brisg.-Barcinone, 1965), 205ff.; André de Halleux, "La définition christologique de Chalcédoine," *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 7 (1976): 156ff.

solve, searching for the sources of its phrases or words in different important dogmatic texts of the 5th century.

However, we do believe that in order to properly investigate the problem of the sources of the Chalcedonian Definition, we should not consider it like a simple literary problem, but primarily as a theological problem, functionally tied to the historical context of the genesis of this dogmatic text.

This is the reason why in our study under the title *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon. Contribution to the historico-dogmatic research of the Definition of the 4th Ecumenical Council*, (Thessaloniki 1986, in Greek) we have tried to show the Cyrillian character of the Chalcedonian Definition by examining the problem concering its sources in immediate and close relation with the historical framework of its generation, and this is because, as is testified in the Minutes of the Council, that this framework is what mainly determined the need for the Definition to have a Cyrillian dogmatic content.

*1. The historical and theological framework*

From the first sessions of the Council the imperial representatives, following the ecclesiastical policy of the Imperial Court, suggested to the Fathers that they compose an Exposition of Faith that would clearly express the Christological doctrine. [4] However, by this tactic they came into conflict both with the ecclesiastical policy of Leo of Rome, who believed that his *Tome* alone had a unique value for the settlement of the Christological problem, as well as with the ecclesiastical policy of Dioscorus of Alexandria, which was exclusively based on the acceptance of the Creed of Nicaea and the "definition" (7th Canon) of Ephesus. [5] Thus, the problem of composing the Exposition of Faith was unavoidably created in the beginning of the Council of Chalcedon.

During the period when the Fathers found themselves confronting this problem, three factions were created within the Council. The first, which consisted chiefly of Westerners and Antiochians, maintained that Leo's *Tome* was sufficient for confronting the Christological problem, which arose with the heresy of Eutyches, [6] while the second faction, largely composed of extreme Alexandrians, followers of Dioscorus, rejected the *Tome* and maintained an exclusive insistence on the Creed of Nicaea and the "definition" of Ephesus, concealing behind this stance their "monophysite" mentality.[7] The third faction was composed chiefly of the bishops of Eastern Illyricum and Palestine, who had

[4] See Mansi (= J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Graz ²1969-1961) VI, 936f.; 952; ACO (= E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, Berolini et Lipsiae, 1927-1940) II,1,1,195; II,1,2,78[274].

[5] For the ecclesiastical policy of Leo of Rome and Dioscorus of Alexandria on this point see Georgios D. Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon. Contribution to the historico-dogmatic research of the Definition of the 4th Ecumenical Council* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras, 1986) (in Greek), 24ff.

[6] See Mansi VI, 953; ACO II,1,2,78[274]. See also Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 39ff.

[7] See Mansi VII, 49ff.; ACO II,1,2,109[305]f. See also Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 57ff.

three times openly expressed their doubts on the Orthodoxy of Leo's *Tome* and its concordance with Cyril. The most important aspect of this point is that every time the *Tome* was disputed by these bishops, its Orthodoxy was defended by the usage of parallel Christological passages from St. Cyril.[8] This means that the Christology of Cyril in comparison with Leo's *Tome* was for the majority of the Fathers in Chalcedon indisputable. While at the outset the Fathers of this faction were not distinguished from the wider faction of the Alexandrians, suddenly on the initiative of Attikos of Nikopolis, and most probably for fear that Leo's *Tome* might be the final exposition of the Chalcedonian Faith, although the doubts concerning its Orthodoxy were withdrawn, the aforementioned Fathers dissociated themselves from the wider faction and accepted the proposal of the imperial representatives that the Exposition of Faith be drafted.[9] Moreover, most of the remaining Fathers were obliged to overcome their original objections and accept the above proposal of the imperial representatives, because they were made conscious that the exclusive insistence on the Creed of Nicea and the "definition" of Ephesus would be a triumph for Monophysitism.[10]

Thus, the committee, which was established under the supervision of Anatolius of Constantinople for this purpose, took into account the objections, which existed as regards the composition of an Exposition of Faith. For this reason the committee regarded it as its purpose and aim not to compose a new dogmatic text, but to repeat important passages and phrases, which had been sanctioned by the indisputable authority of St. Cyril and represented the two phases of his Christology, both before and after the reconciliation of 433. This text, although it was read in the fifth session of the Council, is not preserved in the Minutes, but, as we can conclude from the insistence of the majority of the Fathers who were not willing to change its dogmatic content, as well as from some of its elements preserved in the Minutes of the Council,[11] the text must not have been very different since it was finally accepted. For this reason we have tried to investigate this premise on the basis of the elements preserved.[12] As it

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[8] See Mansi VI, 972f.; ACO II,1,2,81[277]f. See also John S. Romanides, "St. Cyril's 'One *physis* or Hypostasis of God the Logos Incarnate' and Chalcedon", *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10:2 (1965): 88; P. Galtier, "Saint Cyrille d'Alexandrie et Saint Léon le Grand à Chalcédoine", in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht, Bd. I (Würzburg: Echterverlag, [4]1973), 354.

[9] See Mansi VI, 973; ACO II,1,2,82[278]. See also Martzelos, *Genesis and Sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 47ff.

[10] See also Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 62.

[11] See Mansi VII, 101ff.; ACO II,1,2,123[319]ff.

[12] See *op. cit.*, 115ff. The text of this original Definition has the verses, according to our research, in it as follows:

"Επόμενοι τοίνυν τοῖς ἁγίοις πατράσιν (1)
ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν υἱὸν
τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν
συμφώνως ἅπαντες ἐκδιδάσκομεν,
θεὸν τέλειον καὶ ἄνθρωπον τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν (5)
ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος,
ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα
καὶ ὁμοούσιον ἡμῖν τὸν αὐτὸν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα,
κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον ἡμῖν χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας,

seems from the discussions of the Fathers about the content of the text of the original Definition, it did not include the term «θεοτόκος» for the Virgin Mary,[13] it contained the Cyrillian phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" ("of two natures") for the person of Jesus Christ[14] and it also did not include any dyophysite passage from Leo's *Tome*.[15] Instead of the Leonine passage of the *Tome* which was finally added in the text of the final Definition,[16] we hold the opinion that in the original Definition there existed the passage "ἀποτελεσασῶν δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν ἕνα κύριον καὶ Χριστὸν καὶ υἱὸν θεότητος τὲ καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος διὰ τῆς ἀφράστου καὶ ἀπορρήτου πρὸς ἑνότητα συνδρομῆς" from Cyril's *Second Letter to Nestorius*[17] which continues the passage "οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν" from the same letter of Cyril that remained already in the final Definition.[18]

Thus, the exclusively Cyrillian character which the revision committee gave to the text of the original Definition aimed at restoring the unity of the two phases of Cyril's Christology which had been principally attacked by the teaching of Eutyches and Dioscorus, especially during the so-called Robber Synod.[19] Only in this way did the committee believe that Monophysitism and Nestorianism would be fought effectively and that unity would be restored to the bosom of the Church. More precisely, according to the text of the original Definition that we have tried to restore, we believe that the Christological portion of this original Definition in its first part tried to present a descriptive development of the Christological doctrine on the basis of the Formulary of Reunion of 433 from Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*.[20] In the second part the first portion might be summarized on the basis of the dyophysite formula "ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν (...) ἐκ δυὸ φύσεων νοούμενον" ("one and the same son (...) considered of two

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πρὸ αἰώνων μὲν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν θεότητα, (10)
ἐπ' ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν αὐτὸν
δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν
ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα,
ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστὸν, υἱὸν, κύριον, μονογενῆ,
ἐκ δύο φύσεων νοούμενον, (15)
οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν,
ἀποτελεσασῶν δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν ἕνα Κύριον καὶ Χριστὸν καὶ υἱὸν
θεότητος τὲ καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος,
διὰ τῆς ἀφράστου καὶ ἀπορρήτου πρὸς ἑνότητα συνδρομῆς,
οὐκ εἰς δύο πρόσωπα μεριζόμενον ἢ διαιρούμενον, (20)
ἀλλ' ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν μονογενῆ
θεὸν λόγον κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,
καθά περ ἄνωθεν οἱ προφῆται περὶ αὐτοῦ
καὶ αὐτὸς ἡμᾶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐξεπαίδευσεν
καὶ τῷ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῖν παραδέδωκε σύμβολον". (25)

[13] See Mansi VII, 101f.; ACO II,1,2,123[319]f.

[14] See Mansi VII, 104; ACO II,1,2,124[320].

[15] See Mansi VII, 101, 104f.; ACO II,1,2,123[319]; 124[320]f.

[16] See footnote 25 below, verses 19-20.

[17] See PG 77, 45C; Mansi VI, 661; ACO II,1,1,105.

[18] See footnote 25 below, verse 18.

[19] See *op. cit*., 127ff.

[20] See PG 77, 176C-177B; Mansi VI 668f.; ACO II,1,1,108f.

natures") which must have existed in the original Definition and come also from the same letter of Cyril.[21] In the third and last part there was, as we believe, a clarifying explanation of the second part on the basis of Cyril's *Second and Third Letters to Nestorius*, so that both Monophysitism and Nestorianism are explicitly excluded.[22]

However, when the original Definition was read during the fifth session of the Council, objections were made by the papal legates and certain followers of the Antiochian Christological tradition, because they regarded the dyophysite formula of the original Definition as unclear and as having a double-meaning.[23] Receiving support from the imperial representatives they sought to have this dyophysite formula modified on the basis of the clear dyophysitism of Leo's *Tome*. But the great majority of the Fathers were unyielding in opposition to any proposal for modification of the original Definition on the basis of the *Tome*. Finally, after continual pressures and the threat of the Emperor to bring the Council to the West, the Fathers retreated. They formed a revision committee, which made, however, only the few modifications required by the Fathers.[24] It modified namely the "ambiguous" formula of the original Definition and the verse about the "two perfect", which was connected with it. It also added the term "θεοτόκος" for the Virgin Mary as well as only one passage from Leo's *Tome* to replace, as we believe, a parallel passage of Cyril. The final Definition which resulted from these modifications and additions[25] was characterized as an

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[21] See PG 77, 180AB; Mansi VI 672; ACO II,1,1,110: "(...) ὡς εἰς ἤδη νοούμενος μετὰ τῆς ἰδίας σαρκὸς (...) καὶ ὡς ἐν ἐνὶ προσώπω νούμενος. εἰς γὰρ κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, κἂν ἡ τῶν φύσεων μὴ ἀγνοῆται διαφορά, ἐξ ὧν τὴν ἀπόρρητον ἕνωσιν πεπράχθαι φαμὲν".

[22] See Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*. 136f.

[23] See Mansi VII, 104; ACO II,1,2,124[320].

[24] See Mansi VII, 101ff.; ACO II,1,2,123[319]ff. See also Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 67ff.

[25] The final Definition of Chalcedon, the so-called "Symbol of Chalcedon", has in its verses as follows:

"Ἑπόμενοι τοίνυν τοῖς ἁγίοις πατράσιν (1)
ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖν υἱὸν
τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν
συμφώνως ἅπαντες ἐκδιδάσκομεν,
τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν θεότητι (5)
καὶ τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι,
θεὸν ἀληθῶς καὶ ἄνθρωπον ἀληθῶς τὸν αὐτὸν
ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος,
ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα
καὶ ὁμοούσιον ἡμῖν τὸν αὐτὸν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, (10)
κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον ἡμῖν χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας,
πρὸ αἰώνων μὲν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν θεότητα,
ἐπ' ἐσχάτων δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν τὸν αὐτὸν
δι' ἡμᾶς καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν
ἐκ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου τῆς θεοτόκου κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, (15)
ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστὸν υἱὸν κύριον μονογενῆ,
ἐν δύο φύσεσιν ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως γνωριζόμενον,
οὐδαμοῦ τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν,
σῳζομένης δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς ἰδιότητος ἑκατέρας φύσεως
καὶ εἰς ἕν πρόσωπον καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν συντρεχούσης, (20)
οὐκ εἰς δύο πρόσωπα μεριζόμενον ἢ διαιρούμενον,
ἀλλ' ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν υἱὸν μονογενῆ

"interpretation" of the original one[26] and was accepted by the Fathers with enthusiasm.[27]

*2. The Sources of the Chalcedonian Definition*

The above-mentioned historical and theological framework of the origin of the Chalcedonian Definition is the basic area in which the problem of its sources needs to be examined and to identify its theological character.

The first part of the Definition (verses 1-15), in which there is a descriptive development of the Christological doctrine, contains at points, according to the majority of the researchers, the text of the Formulary of Reunion of 433 which is contained in the Letter of St. Cyril to John of Antioch and this almost word for word.[28] If we except verse 11 which has *Hebr.* 4, 15 as its source, all the other verses have as their basic source the Formulary of Reunion (433), which was modified at several points not only on the basis of Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*, as Th. Šagi-Bunić maintained,[29] but also, as we have shown in our above-mentioned study, on the basis of Cyril's *Second* and *Third Letters to Nestorius.*[30]

The second part of the Definition (verses 16-17), which is a synoptic formulation of the first part, portrays in this form the modification suggested by the imperial representatives at the fifth session, namely that the Fathers ought to remove the phrase "of two natures" ("ἐκ δύο φύσεων") from the original Definition and replace it, adding in the text that "there are two natures united immutably and undividedly and unconfusedly in Christ" according to Leo's *Tome*.[31] The sources of the second part are a) as far as verse 16 is concerned, not only the *Second Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius*, as some Roman Catholic theologians maintain,[32] but, as we have proved in the above-mentioned study, also his *Third Letter to Nestorius*,[33] b) as far as the phrase "ἐν δύο φύσεσι γνωριζόμενον" ("known in two natures") of verse 17 is concerned, the Confession of Faith of

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Θεὸν λόγον κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,
καθά περ ἄνωθεν οἱ προφῆται περὶ αὐτοῦ
καὶ αὐτὸς ἡμᾶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐξεπαίδευσεν (25)
καὶ τῷ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῖν παραδέδωκε σύμβολον."

See Mansi VII, 116; ACO II,1,2,129[325]f.

[26] See Mansi VII, 108; ACO II,1,2,126[322].

[27] See Mansi VII, 117; ACO II,1,2,130[326].

[28] See Richard, "L'introduction du mot 'hypostase' dans la théologie de l'Incarnation," 268; de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon", 398f.; Šagi-Bunić, "'Duo perfecta' et 'duae naturae' in definitione dogmatica chalcedonensi", 218; ibid., *'Deus perfectus et homo perfectus' a Concilio Ephesino (a. 431) ad Chalcedonense (a. 451)*, 211; de Halleux, "La définition christologique de Chalcédoine," 23.

[29] See Šagi-Bunić, "'Duo perfecta' et 'duae naturae' in definitione dogmatica chalcedonensi," 216ff.

[30] See Martzelos, *Genesis and Sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 149ff.

[31] See Mansi VII, 105; ACO II,1,2,125[321]: "Οἱ μεγαλοπρεπέστατοι καὶ ἐνδοξότατοι ἄρχοντες εἶπον. Πρόσθετε οὖν τῷ ὅρῳ κατὰ τὴν ψῆφον τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Λέοντος δύο φύσεις εἶναι ἡνωμένας ἀτρέπτως καὶ ἀμερίστως καὶ ἀσυγχύτως ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ".

[32] See Richard, "L'introduction du mot 'hypostase' dans la théologie de l'Incarnation," 268; de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon," 399.

[33] See Martzelos, *Genesis and Sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 171ff.

Basil of Seleucia at the Endemousa Synod of 448 which is examined analytically below, and c) as far as the first three of the four adverbs of verse 17 ("ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως" ["unconfusedly, immutably, undivisibly, inseparably"]) is concerned, the Statement of the Illyrian bishops on the Orthodoxy of Leo's *Tome* and its agreement with Cyril.[34]

The third portion of the Definition (verses 18-26), which is a clarifying explanation of the second part, draws its content not only from the *Second Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius* (verse 18),[35] as well as from Leo's *Tome* (verses 19-20),[36] as the majority of researchers accept[37], but also from the *Third Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius*, so far as the phrase "καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν" ("and one *hypostasis*") of verse 20 is concerned, as well as verses 21-26 which are parallel with passages of this letter.[38] Thus, in its greater extent, the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith consists of verses which came immediately from the *Second* and *Third Letters* of Cyril *to Nestorius* and his *Letter to John of Antioch*, from which the entire text of the original Definition also came. There are of course verses, as we have seen, which did not come directly from Cyril, but came about during the revision of the original Definition from Basil's Confession of Faith at the Endemousa Synod of 448, from Leo's *Tome* and the Statement of the Illyrian bishops on its Orthodoxy, and this finding rightfully poses the question: is it likely that the verses which came from these three sources misquoted the Cyrillian character and the main purpose of the original Definition? And if not, what is their position among the other verses of the final Definition with a so obvious and plethoric Cyrillian character? Therefore, the question which is to be answered is whether the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith constitutes as good a mosaic of Christological elements of eastern and western origin, as some researchers maintain,[39] or in spite of the above-mentioned modifications and additions made in the original text it has an homogenous and uniform and, moreover a Cyrillian theological character.

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[34] See Mansi VII, 29; ACO II,1,2,102[298].

[35] See PG 77, 45C; Mansi VI 661; ACO II,1,1,105.

[36] See ACO II,1,1,13. See also the Latin text in: C. Silva-Tarouca, *S. Leonis Magni Tomus ad Flavianum episc. Constantinopolitanum (Epistola XXVIII) additis Testimoniis Patrum et eiusdem S. Leonis M. Epistola ad Leonem I. Imp. (Epistola CLXV)*, Textus et Documenta in usum exercitationum et praelectionum academicarum, Series Theologica 9 (Romae [5]1959), p. 24.

[37] See Richard, "L'introduction du mot 'hypostase' dans la théologie de l'Incarnation," 268; de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon," 399; Diepen, *Les trois Chapitres au Concile de Chalcédoine*, 112; Th. Šagi-Bunić, "Duo perfecta' et 'duae naturae' in definitione dogmatica chalcedonensi," 67; Hebart, *Zur Struktur der altkirchlichen Christologie*, 636f.; de Halleux, "La définition christologique de Chalcédoine,"162f.

[38] See PG 77, 113A-116C, 120BCD; Mansi IV, 1076f.; 1081f.; ACO I,1,1,37f.; 40f. See also Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 186ff.

[39] See de Urbina, "Das Symbol von Chalkedon," 398, 400; Camelot, "Théologies grecques et théologie latine à Chalcédoine," 142; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 340f.; Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian tradition. From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451), vol. 1*, transl. J. S. Bowden (London: Mowbay, 1965), 481f.

*3. The Cyrillian Character of the "Non-Cyrillian" Verses*

Firstly, it is important to observe that, as is made obvious from the comparison of the texts of the original and the final Definition, modifications must have been made in all three parts of the original one: If we leave out the phrase "τῆς θεοτόκου" which was added in the text of the original Definition, it seems that all the other modifications are not independent from each other. As shall be widely/comprehensively seen below, the basic modification of the second part of the Chalcedonian Definition (verses 16-17) was decisive for the modifications made in its first part (verses 1-15) and in its third part (verses 18-26) as well.

More precisely, in the first part of the original Definition (verses 1-13) the Formulary of Reunion (433) is quoted, as we have said, from the *Letter* of Cyril *to John of Antioch*, but almost in its original Antiochian form. Only verses 2 and 9 are exempted. And this is because verse 2, as we believe, interprets the passage "τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν" ("our Lord Jesus Christ") of the Formulary of Reunion (433) on the basis of the *Second* and *Third Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius*, obviously in order to exclude the danger that the names "κύριον", "Ἰησοῦν" and "Χριστὸν" of the original Definition (verse 3) can be conceived in a Nestorian way. As far as verse 9 is concerned, it was also added, in order to interpret and safeguard verse 8 of the original Definition on the basis of the passage *Hebr*. 4. 15, excluding in this way the Eutychian fear, that the human nature of the incarnate Word could be conceived as sinful, if it is considered as consubstantial with our human nature.[40] All the other verses of the first part of the original Definition depend word for word on the Formulary of Reunion (433), as it is quoted in the *Letter* of Cyril *to John of Antioch*. This literal dependence was indeed so great that the word "θεοτόκος" which is the key and the core of the Cyrillian Christology was not involved in the text of the original Definition!

In the text of the final Definition we see, however, that the Formulary of Reunion (433) is not quoted in an almost Antiochian form as happens in the text of the original Definition; it is interpreted to a greater extent not only on the basis of Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*, as Th. Šagi-Bunić maintained, but also, as we have said, on the basis of Cyril's *Second* and *Third Letters to Nestorius*. For example the passage "θεὸν τέλειον καὶ ἄνθρωπον τέλειον" ("perfect God and perfect man") from the Formulary of Reunion on the one hand was interpreted on the basis of the passage "τέλειος ὢν ἐν θεότητι καὶ τέλειος ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι" ("being perfect in divinity and the same perfect in humanity") from Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*, so that it produced verses 5-6, and on the other hand it was interpreted, as we shall see analytically below, on the basis of Cyril's *Third Letter to Nestorius*,[41] so that it produced verse 7 of the final Definition.

Nevertheless, this ascertainment rightfully poses the question: Why did the revision committee of the original Definition come to the necessity of a

[40] See Martzelos, *Genesis and Sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 168ff.

[41] See PG 77, 180B; Mansi VI, 672; ACO II,1,1,110.

further Cyrillian interpretation of the Formulary of Reunion in the final Definition?

The answer to this question is wholly connected with the modification of the second part of the original Definition (verses 14-15). As we have seen above, despite the suggestion of the imperial representatives, that the Fathers ought to add in the text of the Definition that "there are two natures united immutably and undividedly and unconfusedly in Christ" according to Leo's *Tome* in replacement of the phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων", the revision committee preferred to replace the phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" with the dyophysite expression "ἐν δύο φύσεσι γνωριζόμενον" ("known in two natures") from Basil's of Seleucia Confession of Faith at the Endemousa Synod of 448.[42] The main reason for this choice of the revision committee was, in our opinion, its purpose to give the new dyophysite formula in the Definition an obvious Cyrillian character, similar with the formula "ἐκ δύο φύσεων", so that it may be indisputable from the side of the "Monophysite" bishops of the Council who wanted the Definition to be in absolute agreement with Cyril. Furthermore, we have to point out that there was not a more suitable dyophysite formula in the Minutes of Chalcedon, so that it may correspond to this intention of the revision committee, than that of Basil of Seleucia who formulated it in the context of his Confession of Faith at the Endemousa Synod of 448 based exclusively on St. Cyril.

Indeed, not only in the Endemousa Synod of 448 but also in the so-called Robber-Synod (449) and in Chalcedon (451) is Basil shown as a warm defender of and a good expert on Cyril's Christology. Of course, he expresses his Christological thought using either the Antiochian or alternatively the Alexandrian terminology, but always in the framework of the Cyrillian Christology. It is very characteristic that, although he formulates the Christological doctrine in an orthodox way on the basis of his dyophysite formula, he does not hesitate to express himself orthodoxly on the basis of the

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[42] Basil's of Seleucia Confession of Faith at the Endemousa Synod of 448 has in verses as follows:

"Τὶς δύναται ταῖς τοῦ μακαρίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Κυρίλλου μέμψασθαι φωναῖς; (1)
ὃς τὴν ἀσέβειαν Νεστορίου μέλλουσαν ἐπικλύζειν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐπέσχεν διὰ οἰκείας
συνέσεως
κακείνου διαιροῦντος εἰς δύο πρόσωπα καὶ δύο υἱοὺς
τὸν ἕνα κύριον ἡμῶν καὶ θεὸν καὶ σωτῆρα Χριστὸν
αὐτὸς ἔδειξεν ἐπὶ ἑνὸς προσώπου καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ κυρίου καὶ δεσπότου τῆς κτίσεως (5)
θεότητά τε γνωριζομένην τελείαν καὶ ἀνθρωπότητα τελείαν.
ἀποδεχόμεθα τοίνυν πάντα τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένα καὶ ἐπεσταλμένα
ὡς ἀληθῆ καὶ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐχόμενα
καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν τὸν ἕνα κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν
ἐν δύο φύσεσι γνωριζόμενον. (10)
τὴν μὲν γὰρ εἶχεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ προαιώνιον
ὡς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς δόξης,
τὴν δὲ ὡς ἐκ μητρὸς δι' ἡμᾶς γεννηθεὶς
λαβὼν ἐξ αὐτῆς ἥνωσεν ἑαυτῷ καθ' ὑπόστασιν
καὶ κεχρημάτικεν ὁ τέλειος θεὸς καὶ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (15)
καὶ τέλειος ἄνθρωπος καὶ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου,
πάντας ἡμᾶς σῶσαι βουληθεὶς
ἐν τῷ γενέσθαι κατὰ πάντα ἡμῖν παραπλήσιος πλὴν ἁμαρτίας.
τοὺς δὲ ἐναντιουμένους τοῖς τοιούτοις δόγμασιν
ἐχθροὺς της ἐκκλησίας εἶναι φαμέν" (20) (Mansi VI, 828; ACO II,1,1,179).

Cyrillian miaphysite expression "one nature of God the incarnate Word".[43] This fact shows not only how correctly he understood the Christology of Cyril, but also in which sense he conceived his dyophysite formula. The suppleness that characterises his Christological thought on this point is due mainly to the fact that he not only knows well but also follows faithfully both folds of Cyril's Christology, namely before and after the Formulary of Reunion (433). He underlines in his Confession of Faith explicitly that he accepts as true and Orthodox all the works and letters of St. Cyril, namely both before and after the Reconciliation of 433. Exactly for this reason he presents in a contrived way the unity of both folds of Cyril's Christology in his Confession of Faith. Elements of the Cyrillian Christology after the Reconciliation of 433 are harmoniously and functionally connected in his Confession with Cyrillian elements before the Reconciliation of 433.[44] His Confession of Faith shows how easily he moves in these two folds of Cyril's Christology.

Of course, at first glance it seems, however, that this formula does not have any connection to Cyril of Alexandria; moreover, it strikingly resembles some particular dyophysite expressions used by Nestorius. At least two of Nestorius' sermons show that he must have been the architect of dyophysite expressions such as "one Son (...) known (...) in two natures" in the Antiochian Christological tradition.[45] Not only the expression "one Christ or Son in two natures", but also the connection with this expression of the verb "know" is commonplace in the dyophysite expressions of Nestorius and in the dyophysite formula of Basil. Perhaps this explains why, when Basil expressed his dyophysite formula for the first time in Chalcedon, the Egyptian and other "Monophysite" bishops cried: "this is what Nestorius believed; this is what Nestorius said".[46]

This certainly does not exclude Basil, who knew well, as we have shown in one of our studies, the sermons and the teaching of Nestorius[47], from taking the dyophysite formula "one Christ or Son known... in two natures" from Nestorius, or, even if that did not occur, he took the formula via the Antiochian Christological tradition, where it would have been widely known. However, he

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[43] See Mansi VI, 636f.; 745 f; ACO II,1,1,93; 144f.

[44] See for example verses 8-10 of Basil's Confession (footnote 42) where the emphasis on the union "καθ' ὑπόστασιν," which is a basic characteristic element of Cyril's Christology in his *Second* and *3rd Letters to Nestorius* (see PG 77, 45B, 48B, 48D, 112C, 117D, 120C; Mansi VI, 661; 664; ACO II,1,1,105-106), is excellently combined with the emphasis on the "two perfect" of the Formulary of Reunion in Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch* (see PG 77, 176D, 180B; Mansi VI, 669; 672; ACO II,1,1,108-110).

[45] See Fr. Loofs, *Nestoriana. Die Fragmente des Nestorius* (Halle: Niemeyer 1905), 328: "Γνωρίζομεν τοίνυν τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα τοῦ βρέφους καὶ τὴν θεότητα, [ὁμολογοῦμεν τὴν τῶν φύσεων διαφορὰν (...)], τὸ τῆς υἱότητος τηροῦμεν μοναδικὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητος καὶ θεότητος φύσει"; 330: "[(...) ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν θεωρούμενον ἐν ἀκτίστῳ καὶ κτιστῇ φύσει (...) Γνωρίζεται οὖν ὡς εἷς Χριστὸς ἐν δύο φύσεσιν, θείᾳ τὲ καὶ ἀνθρωπίνῃ, ὁρατῇ καὶ ἀοράτῳ (...) εἷς υἱὸς ἐν δύο φύσεσιν]". The passages in brackets are only saved in the Syriac translation, from which Loofs included them translated into German in the surviving Greek fragments. In Greek we attach them in the archaic style, trying to give the approximate original form.

[46] See Mansi VI, 636; ACO II,1,1,93: "ταῦτα Νεστόριος ἐφρόνει· ταῦτα Νεστόριος ἐβόα".

[47] See G. D. Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας καὶ ἡ οἰκουμενικὴ σημασία της* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras Pub., 1990), 44ff. (in Greek).

had already undertaken by his Confession in the Endemousa Synod of 448—and it is exactly here that his fruitful and creative contribution in bridging the chasm between the Antiochian and Alexandrian Christologies appear—not merely to use this dyophysite formula in an orthodox way and even against the teaching of Nestorius, characterizing him as "lunatic",[48] but also to genetically link it, concerning its content, with Cyril, considering his Christological teaching as its source.

Basil does not belong to those who ruminate mechanically and in an unassimilated way on the dogmatic teaching of the Church Fathers. Based exclusively on St. Cyril he formulates his dyophysite formula and in this way he extends both richly and creatively Cyril's Christology, so that it may correspond also to the new theological challenges of Monophysitism. So even though his dyophysite formula has not a Cyrillian form, it has, however, out and out Cyrillian content. That's why he considers it absolutely consistent with the teaching of St. Cyril and the Third Ecumenical Council.[49] It is actually characteristic that the relationship of Basil's dyophysite formula with the Christological teaching of Cyril was made tangible already in the Endemousa Synod of 448, and the widespread popularity/manifestation of feeling for the veracity of this formula among the Fathers of this Synod is precisely due to this fact.

Indeed, already from the beginning of his Confession, he not only explicitly turns against the heresy of Nestorius, but argues with fervour and enthusiasm in favour of the undisputed character of Cyril's Christological teaching.[50] While, as noted, Nestorius with his impious teaching divided "our one Lord and God and Saviour Christ" into "two persons and two sons" (v. 4-5), Cyril showed that "perfect divinity and perfect humanity is known in one person and Son and Lord and Master of creation" (v. 6-7). Especially at this point, Basil paraphrases, in an original and creative way, the interpretation that Cyril makes in the "double perfection" ("perfect God and perfect man")[51] of the Formulary of Reunion (433), as expressed in his *Letter to John of Antioch* ("perfect (...) in divinity and the same perfect in humanity"—"τέλειος (...) ἐν θεότητι καὶ τέλειος ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι")[52] and in this way he essentially summarizes the quintessence of Cyril's Christology, so as to clearly exclude Nestorianism.

Precisely for this reason, regarding the under discussion dyophysite formula, there exists a radical difference between Nestorius and Basil. For Nestorius the "one Christ and Son", for whom he speaks about, is not the Son and Word of God, as it is for Basil, but the moral person resulting from the union of the two natures. For Nestorius the terms "Christ" and "Son" do not exclusively declare the Son and Word of God, but both of his natures; they are "messages" of the two natures.[53] Contrariwise for Basil, the "one Christ" who "is

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[48] See Mansi VI, 636; ACO II,1,1,92.

[49] See Mansi VI, 636; ACO II,1,1,92f. See also Mansi VI, 685; ACO II,1,1,117.

[50] See ftn 42, v. 1-7.

[51] See Mansi VI, 668; ACO II,1,1,108.

[52] See PG 77, 180B; Mansi VI, 672; ACO II,1,1,110.

[53] See Loofs, *Nestoriana*, 171, 175, 176, 182, 192, 196, 211, 254, 269, 271, 273, 274, 295, 307, 317, 318, 336, 358, 361. See also F. Nau, *Nestorius. Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, traduit en français (Paris:

known in two natures", as already shown in his Confession and as he explicitly underlined in Chalcedon, is solely "the only-begotten Son of God, God the Word",[54] something which Nestorius would not be able to accept on the basis of his teaching.

However, beyond that, Basil clearly points out that his dyophysite formula is not only anti-Nestorian, but also originates from the Christological teaching of Cyril and is inextricably tied to it.[55] Indeed, already in his Confession, his dyophysite formula (v. 10-11) not only conclusively summarises the para-phrase that he himself makes regarding Cyril's interpretation of the "two perfect [natures]" of the Formulary of Reunion, but also it is considered in a way to be dogmatically equivalent to that, since it produces the same dogmatic truth in a slightly different way. In his dyophysite formula "our one Lord Jesus Christ" is known "in two natures" (v. 10-11), while in the paraphrase that is made in the Cyrillian interpretation of the "two perfect [natures]" of the Formulary of Reunion, the perfect divinity and perfect humanity is known as "over one person and Son and Lord and Master of creation" (v. 6-7). Common points between these two Christological formulas are not only the emphasis on "one Lord" or "one person", but also the use of the participle of the verb "to know". The close relationship between these two Christological formulas becomes even more evident for Basil's dyophysite formula with his clarifications which he affirms in Chalcedon: "What I said: known in two natures after the union, in perfect divinity and perfect humanity".[56] This clarification clearly shows that the two natures in the dyophysite formula of Basil's Confession are just the perfect divinity and the perfect humanity, of which he speaks in the paraphrase that he makes in Cyril's interpretation of the "two perfect [natures]" in the Formulary of Reunion (v. 6-7).[57]

These facts inevitably lead us to the source from which Basil produces his dyophysite formula and, as it seems not only from his Confession of Faith but also from what he said about it in the Council of Chalcedon, this source cannot be other than the above-mentioned passage from Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*, in which Cyril interprets, in his own manner, the "two perfect [natures]" of the Formulary of Reunion. Indeed, in this passage, Cyril does not refer only to the double perfection of one and the same person "in divinity and (...) humanity", but also explicitly calls his "divinity" and "humanity" "natures (φύσεις)" ("even if the difference of natures (...)"—"κἂν ἡ τῶν φύσεων (...) διαφορά"),[58] and that, as it appears, did not go unnoticed by Basil. Already in

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Letouzey et Ané 1910), 146, 184, 185; G. L. Driver and L. Hodgson, *Nestorius. The Bazaar of Heracleides*, newly translated from the Syriac (Oxford: Chalcedon Press, 1925), 166, 207, 209.

[54] See Mansi *op. cit.*; ACO II,1,1,92f.

[55] See footnote 42, v. 1-11.

[56] See Mansi VI, 636; ACO II,1,1,93: "Ὅ ἔλεγον· ἐν δύο φύσεσιν γνωριζόμενον μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, θεότητι τελείᾳ καὶ ἀνθρωπότητι τελείᾳ".

[57] See also Th. Šagi-Bunić, '*Deus perfectus et homo perfectus*,' 192.

[58] See PG 77, 180B; Mansi VI, 672; ACO II,1,1,110: "τέλειος ὢν ἐν θεότητι καὶ τέλειος ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι, καὶ ὡς ἐν ἑνὶ προσώπῳ νοούμενος. εἷς γὰρ κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, κἂν ἡ τῶν φύσεων μὴ ἀγνοῆται διαφορά, ἐξ ὧν τὴν ἀπόρρητον ἕνωσιν πεπρᾶχθαι φαμέν".

the Endemousa Synod of 448 he has a clear and crystallised opinion on this subject. It is very enlightening for the meaning, of which Basil observes in the phrase "two natures", the question he asks Eutyches at the Endemousa Synod: "do you say that two natures are known in the Lord, divinity and humanity"?[59]

Certainly the characterisation of the "divinity" and the "humanity" of Christ as "natures", and, of course, as different from each other, correspond not only to the above-mentioned passage from Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*, but also to his *Second Letter to Nestorius*.[60] However, the advantage of the above-mentioned Cyrillian passage is that the characterisation of the "divinity" and the "humanity" of Christ as "natures" is combined with the double perfection of the one and the same person of Christ and this is exactly what Basil exploits theologically. Thus from the phrase "one Lord Jesus Christ (...) perfect (...) in divinity and perfect (...) in humanity" of the above-mentioned Cyrillian passage, the phrase "one Lord (...) Jesus Christ in two natures" of his dyophysite formula is very easily produced. With this phrase Basil essentially summarizes, in a conclusive way, the double perfection "in divinity and (...) humanity" of the one person of Christ, according to the above-mentioned passage of Cyril's *Letter to John of Antioch*.[61]

As far as the participle "γνωριζόμενον" ("known") is concerned, with which Basil puts down his dyophysite formula (v. 11), we can reasonably argue that, like the participle "γνωριζομένην" ("known") of his dyophysite Confession (v. 7), he produces it in all likelihood from the phrase "μή ἀγνοῆται" (i.e. "not to be ignored", i.e. "to be known"), which also exists in the same Cyrillian passage.[62] With this participle Basil essentially renders with one word the basic teaching of Cyril, which survives in this passage, that the unity of the person of Christ does not negate the difference of His two natures which came together in this "secret union" ("ἀπόρρητον ἕνωσιν")[63], as well as his widespread teaching, after the Reconciliation of 433, that the knowledge of the difference of natures after the union does not mean division or separation or a breakdown of a person of the incarnate Word in two natures and two persons, because his natures are distinguished by themselves "only in a theoretical manner" ("κατὰ μόνην τὴν θεωρίαν").[64]

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[59] See Mansi VI, 813; ACO II,1,1,173: "λέγεις γνωρίζεσθαι δύο φύσεις ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ, θεότητα καὶ ἀνθρωπότητα;".

[60] See PG 77, 45C; Mansi VI, 661; ACO II,1,1,105: "οὐχ ὡς τῆς τῶν φύσεων διαφορᾶς ἀνῃρημένης διὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, ἀποτελεσασῶν δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν ἕνα κύριον καὶ Χριστὸν καὶ υἱὸν θεότητός τε καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος διὰ τῆς ἀφράστου καὶ ἀπορρήτου πρὸς ἑνότητα συνδρομῆς".

[61] See Th. Šagi-Bunić, «'Duo perfecta' et 'duae naturae' in definitionem dogmatica chalcedonensi», *op. cit.*, p. 325; see also ibid., *'Deus perfectus et homo perfectus' a Concilio Ephesino (a. 431) ad Chalcedonense (a. 451)* (Romae-Friburgi Brisg.-Barcinone 1965), 209; Martzelos, *Genesis and sources of the Definition of Chalcedon*, 156.

[62] See ftn. 58.

[63] See also ftn. 58.

[64] See Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle 46*, *Πρός Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας ἐπιστολή Β΄*, PG 77, 245A; ACO I,1,6,162. See also *Epistle 44*, *Πρός Εὐλόγιον πρεσβύτερον Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, PG 77, 225B; ACO I,1,4,35; *Epistle 45*, *Πρός Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας ἐπιστολή Α΄*, PG 77, 232D-233A; ACO I,1,6,153f.; *Epistle 40*, *Πρός Ἀκάκιον ἐπίσκοπον Μελιτηνῆς*, PG 77, 192D; 193A; 193C; ACO I,1,4,26; 27. See also R. V. Sellers, *Two ancient Christologies. A study in the*

Characteristics for the notion, in which Basil understands the participle "known" (v. 7 and 11) in his dyophysite Confession, are his two following clarifying interventions at the Council of Chalcedon:

When the Egyptians and other "monophysite" bishops reacted to his dyophysite formula, shouting: "No one should divide the undivided; no one should say the one two",[65] he agreed with them while underlining at the same time his opposition to Monophysitism, with the following statement: "Anathema to splitting, anathema to dividing the two natures after the union; but also anathema to not knowing the peculiarity of the natures".[66]

Moreover, when Eustathius of Beirut, also obviously alarmed by Basil's dyophysite formula and other dyophysite expressions that were heard at the Council, expressed the fear that there was a danger for some to claim that "a doctrinal decision was taken to say two divided natures after the union",[67] Basil interrupted him abruptly and, wanting to make clear the difference of the Orthodox Christological doctrine from Nestorianism and Monophysitism, he emphatically gave the following clarification: "We know the natures, we do not divide them; we do not say them either divided or confused".[68]

In the Nestorian division and in the Monophysite confusion of the natures Basil draws attention to their simple "knowledge", which is not understood differently than the Cyrillian way as a distinction of natures "only in a theoretical manner". The expressions, "to know the natures" and "to know the peculiarity of the natures", which Basil used above, are identical to each other. "To know the natures" means "to know the peculiarity of the natures". In this sense, as we understand, these expressions are parallel with the expression "the difference of the natures is not ignored" that Cyril used in the above-mentioned passage of his *Letter to John of Antioch*, where he interprets the "two perfect [natures]" of the Formulary of Reunion.[69] Of course there are even more similar expressions that Cyril used mainly in his letters after the Reconciliation of 433,[70] expressions that Basil certainly knew, because he was, as it seems from his Christological statements in the Endemousa Synod (448) and in the so called "Robber" Synod (449), well learned in both aspects of Cyril's Christology.

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*Christological thought of the schools of Alexandria and Antioch in the early history of Christian doctrine* (London: SPCK, 1954), 93 and ibid., *The Council of Chalcedon. A historical and doctrinal survey* (London: SPCK, $^{2}$1961), 144.

[65] See Mansi VI, 636; ACO II,1,1,93.

[66] See Mansi, *op. cit.*; ACO, *op. cit.*: "Ἀνάθεμα τῷ μερίζοντι ἀνάθεμα τῷ διαιρούντι τὰς δύο φύσεις μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν· ἀνάθεμα δὲ καὶ τῷ μὴ γνωρίζοντι τὸ ἰδιάζον τῶν φύσεων".

[67] See Mansi VI, 744; ACO II,1,1,143.

[68] See Mansi, *op. cit.*; ACO, *op. cit.*: "Γνωρίζομεν τὰς φύσεις, οὐ διαιροῦμεν· οὔτε διῃρημένας οὔτε συγκεχυμένας λέγομεν".

[69] See footnote 58.

[70] See the particular expressions: "τὸ εἰδέναι τῶν φύσεων τὴν διαφοράν" (*Epistle 44*, *Πρὸς Εὐλόγιον πρεσβύτερον Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, PG 77, 225B; ACO I,1,4,35); "ἐν ψιλαῖς διελόντες ἐννοίαις καὶ ὡς ἐν ἰσχναῖς θεωρίαις ἤτοι νοῦ φαντασίαις τὴν διαφορὰν δεξάμενοι" (*Epistle 46*, *Πρὸς Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας ἐπιστολὴ Β΄*, PG 77, 245A; ACO I,1,6,162); "Καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο νοηθείη ἂν ἡ τῶν φύσεων, ἤγουν ὑποστάσεων διαφορά· οὐ γὰρ που ταὐτὸν ἐν ποιότητι φυσικῇ θεότης καὶ ἀνθρωπότης" (*Epistle 40*, *Πρὸς Ἀκάκιον ἐπίσκοπον Μελιτηνῆς*, PG 77, 193BC; ACO I,1,4,27).

However, we have the opinion that the term "γνωρίζειν" ("to know") in its various forms, which Basil consciously and persistently connects with the "two natures", can only be derived from the expression "μὴ ἀγνοῆται" (i.e. "not to be ignored", i.e. "to be known") of the above-mentioned Cyrillian passage. This is not only because both participles "known" in his Confession (v. 7 and 11) are organically connected with the expressions "perfect (...) divinity (...) and perfect humanity" (v. 7) and "in two natures" (v. 11) respectively, which also originate from the same Cyrillian passage, but also because the "two natures," which are attached with the verb "to know" or "to be known", mean, as we have seen, according to Basil, just as they appear in the above-mentioned Cyrillian passage: as perfect divinity and perfect humanity.

Consequently, even if Basil's dyophysite formula has an Antiochian or Nestorianizing form, we can reasonably accept with certainty that he essentially produces it from Cyril. Only in the way Basil understands and uses his dyophysite formula, according to the teaching of Cyril, can the distinction of natures of the incarnate Word after the union, without risking the danger of splitting his person, be understood. Exactly for that reason in relation to the expressions "to know the natures" or "to know the peculiarity of the natures", which are certainly associated with the dyophysite formula of his Confession, Basil feels, as we have seen, the need to emphasise the "unconfused" and "indivisibile" character of the two natures. This emphasis is indeed done in such a way as to be considered an integral element of "knowing the natures" and by extension, of his dyophysite formula. Moreover, it is no coincidence that since the Endemousa Synod of 448, where his dyophysite formula was expressed for the first time, Basil stresses with particular emphasis the unconfused and indivisibile character of the two natures, while rejecting both Nestorianism and Monophysitism.[71] In his two-sided struggle against the two extreme and opposite Christological heresies amongst them, his dyophysite formula is the most effective weapon in his hands, based on the *Letter* of Cyril to *John of Antioch*.

Exactly for this reason the value of Basil's dyophysite formula, as a means of combating both Nestorianism and Monophysitism on the basis of the Christological teaching of Cyril, was certainly not ignored by the Fathers of Chalcedon, who in the Definition they composed, as supported by our related study,[72] sought not only to give a visibly Cyrillian character, but also to keep it intact from the few additions and modifications proposed in the Council. Consequently, when during the fifth session of the Council there arose a question of replacing the formula "of two natures" ("ἐκ δύο φύσεων") of the original Definition with another phrase, deriving from the *Tome* of Leo and having a clear dyophysite character, the Committee set up for the revision of the original

[71] See the remark made by Basil to Eutyches because of his monophysite confession at the Endemousa Synod of 488: "ἐάν μὴ μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν ἀχωρίστους καὶ ἀσυγχύτους εἴπῃς δύο φύσεις σύγχυσιν λέγεις καὶ σύγκρασιν" (Mansi VI, 637; ACO II,1,1,93. See also Mansi VI, 817f.; ACO II,1,1,175).

[72] See G. D. Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγὲς τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας. Συμβολὴ στὴν ἱστορικοδογματικὴ διερεύνηση τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Δ΄ Οἰκουμενικῆς συνόδου* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras Pub., 1986), 93, 136, 197 (in Greek).

Definition, preferred for this purpose, instead of the dyophysite formula of Pope Leo, which was proposed by the imperial representatives,[73] Basil's dyophysite formula, which had a Cyrillian origin and harmonised perfectly with the general Cyrillian character of the original Definition.[74] Indeed, the Committee which was set up for the revision of the original Definition, in order to make clear in the text of the final Definition the Cyrillian origin of the new dyophysite formula and to thus exclude the possibility of being considered as Nestorian, expressed the double perfection not in the form of the Formulary of Reunion ("perfect God and perfect man"), which echoed the Antiochian mode of expression, but in the interpretative form that Cyril gave in his *Letter to John of Antioch* ("perfect (...) in divinity and perfect the same in humanity"), on the basis of which Basil, as we have seen, produces his dyophysite formula.[75] For this reason the revision Committee formulated the double perfection in the text of the final Definition as follows: "τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν θεότητι καὶ τέλειον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι"—"perfect the same in divinity and perfect the same in humanity" (v. 5-6). In this manner, the revision Committee of the original Definition was not only successful in making the Cyrillian origin of the new dyophysite formula irrefutable, but also strongly highlighted its intimate and inseparable relationship with the "double perfection" in the text of the final Definition.[76]

After this necessary modification of the double perfection in verse 5 of the original Definition the revision committee thought it well to repeat this verse in the text of the final Definition, but with other words on the basis of Cyril's *Third Letter to Nestorius*, that annotates the Christological part of the Symbol of Nicaea, stressing especially that Christ is "true God"[77] and "the same God and man as well".[78] For this reason the revision committee replaced the noun "τέλειος" ("perfect") of verse 5 of the original Definition with the adverb "ἀληθῶς" ("truly"), so that verse 7 may come to light in the text of the final Definition.

All these modifications of the first part of the original Definition were exclusively determined, as it is clear, by the necessary modification of its second part, because they were intimately connected with the effort of the revision committee to underline in an indisputable way the Cyrillian character of the new dyophysite formula in the text of the final Definition.

As far as the theological character of the four adverbs ("ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως"—"unconfusedly, immutably, undivisibly, inseparably") in the new dyophysite formula is concerned, it should be pointed

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[73] See Mansi VII, 105; ACO II,1,2,125[321]: "Οἱ μεγαλοπρεπέστατοι καὶ ἐνδοξότατοι ἄρχοντες εἶπον. Πρόσθετε οὖν τῷ ὅρῳ κατὰ τὴν ψῆφον τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Λέοντος δύο φύσεις εἶναι ἡνωμένας ἀτρέπτως καὶ ἀμερίστως καὶ ἀσυγχύτως ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ".

[74] See Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγὲς τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας*, 175f., 200.

[75] See also *op. cit.*, 207f.

[76] See also G. D. Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας καὶ ἡ οἰκουμενικὴ σημασία της* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras Pub., 1990), 242f. (in Greek).

[77] See PG 77, 109C; Mansi IV, 1072; ACO I,1,1,35. Cf. PG 77, 120C; 121A; Mansi IV, 1081; 1084; ACO I,1,1,40f.

[78] See PG 77, 120C, 121A; Mansi IV, 1081; 1084; ACO I,1,1,40f.

out that it is also indisputably Cyrillian. Of course these adverbs are actually a common property of the fore-Cyrillian theological tradition;[79] we must keep in mind, however, that at least the first three of them were often used by Cyril and in this way they were indissolubly connected with his Christological teaching,[80] while the fourth one, referring to the unity of the two natures in the "one and the same" person of Christ, expresses clearly, like the third one, the quintessence of his teaching against Nestorius.[81] Exactly for this reason, as we have seen above, the first three of them, and even in the same order they are in the Definition, were used in the Statement of the bishops of Eastern Illyricum on the Orthodoxy of Leo's *Tome* and its agreement with Cyril. In order to duly estimate this fact, we have to take into account that the Illyrian bishops were not only warm defenders of Cyril's Christology; they were also those in the Council who posed the question of agreement of Leo's *Tome* with the *Third Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius*. Moreover, their Statement reflects, as Diepen rightly noticed, the first and the fourth Anathematisms of this letter to Nestorius.[82]

After the first and the second parts of the original Definition have been so undeniably well adapted to the Christological teaching of St. Cyril, one would expect, even according to the demands of the papal and imperial representatives, that at least the only passage from Leo's *Tome* existing in the Definition (verses 19-20) ought to remain as it is in the *Tome* and not to be adapted to the teaching of Cyril. Nevertheless the complete opposite has happened.

As we have said, in the place of the Leonine passage there existed in the original Definition the passage "ἀποτελεσασῶν δὲ μᾶλλον τὸν ἕνα κύριον καὶ Χριστὸν καὶ υἱὸν θεότητός τε καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος διά τῆς ἀφράστου καὶ ἀπορρήτου πρός ἑνότητα συνδρομῆς" from Cyril's *Second Letter to Nestorius*. This, however, rightfully poses the question: What is the reason for this Leonine passage being added in the text of the final Definition as a replacement for the above-mentioned passage of St. Cyril which, as it seems from the Minutes of the Council, was neither disputed nor demanded to be modified or replaced?

We hold the opinion that after the adoption of Basil's of Seleucia dyophysite formula in the most crucial part of the Definition, the revision committee thought it just as well, according to the main demand of the papal and imperial representatives, to replace the above-mentioned passage of Cyril in the original Definition with a characteristic dyophysite passage from Leo's *Tome*. So this modification in the third part of the original Definition has also to do

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[79] See for example Amphilochius of Iconium, Fragm. 15, *Ἐκ τῆς πρὸς Σέλευκον ἐπιστολῆς*, PG 39, 113B. See also Athanasius of Alexandria, *Εἰς τόν 98 ψαλμόν* 5, PG 27, 421C; Didimus of Alexandria, *Περὶ Ἁγίας Τριάδος* 3, 6, PG 39, 844B; 3, 13; PG 39, 861A; 3, 18, PG 39, 884D; 3,20, PG 39, 896A; Gregory of Nyssa, *Ἀντιρρητικὸς πρὸς τὰ Ἀπολιναρίου* 21, PG 45, 1165A; Marcus Eremita, *Εἰς τὸν Μελχισεδὲκ* 5, PG 65, 1124A.

[80] See *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸ κατὰ Λουκᾶν Εὐαγγέλιον 2*, PG 72, 484C; *Ἀπολογητικὸς ὑπὲρ τῶν δώδεκα κεφαλαίων πρὸς τοὺς τῆς Ἀνατολῆς ἐπισκόπους 11*, PG 76, 376C; *Πρὸς Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας ἐπιστολὴ Α΄*, PG 77, 232BC; *Πρὸς Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας ἐπιστολὴ Β΄*, PG 77, 245C.

[81] See also Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon*, 215.

[82] See H. M. Diepen, "Les douzes Anathématismes au Concile d'Éphèse et jusqu'en 519", *Revue Thomiste* 55 (1955): 335f.; ibid., *Douzes dialogues de Christologie ancienne* (Roma 1960), 119ff.

with the basic and necessary modification of its second part, and concretely with the adoption of Basil's dyophysite formula in the text of the final Definition.

The main reason for which the revision committee chose this passage from Leo's *Tome* was most probably that it is parallel with the whole passage as it existed in the original Definition (verses 16-19) from Cyril's *Second Letter to Nestorius*. Attention should be drawn to the fact that this choice was certainly correct especially after the contestation of Leo's *Tome* and its defense on the basis of parallel passages from Cyril. Only in this way could the Orthodoxy of this characteristic dyophysite passage of the *Tome* be safeguarded and made undisputable. In other words the revision committee, in order to satisfy the will of the papal and imperial representatives, added a characteristic dyophysite passage from Leo's *Tome* in the text of the final Definition; it took care, however, that this passage should completely agree with a similar passage of Cyril.

This specific interest of the revision committee is clear also from the philological and theological modifications it (the committee) brought about in this Leonine passage. Thus, although this passage in the Greek translation of the *Tome* begins with the expression "Σωζομένης τοίνυν (...)" and ends with the participle "συνιούσης", in the text of the final Definition it begins with the expression "σωζομένης δὲ μᾶλλον (...)" and ends with the participle "συντρεχούσης". This fact reveals the interest of the revision committee to adapt the beginning and the end of this passage to the beginning ("ἀποτελεσασῶν δὲ μᾶλλον") and the end ("συνδρομῆς") of the Cyrillian passage it replaced. This is not, we think, a mere stylistic modification of the Leonine passage, in order that it may be from a philological point of view smoothly connected with the Cyrillian passage of the previous verse in the final Definition. If it were so, the modification of the participle "συνιούσης" in "συντρεχούσης" on the basis of the last word ("συνδρομῆς") of the Cyrillian passage in the original Definition could not have happened, because both participles have the same semantic content. Moreover, we must take into account that the notion of the "συνδρομή" ("running together") of Christ's two natures exists not only in this passage which was contained, as we believe, in the original Definition, but also in many other passages of Cyril and it is one of the most characteristic Cyrillian notions in which they declare the unbroken unity of the two natures in the one person of the incarnate Word. Precisely for these reasons we hold the opinion that this modification clearly betrays the effort of the revision committee to give an obvious Cyrillian character to the Leonine passage of the Definition.

Apart from that, the basic modification of the Leonine passage which betrays its conformance with the Christology of Cyril, is mainly the addition to it of the expression "καὶ μίαν ὑπόστασιν" (verse 20). Although the Greek word "ὑπόστασις" (substantia) in the Latin theological tradition was, as a matter of course, synonymous with the Greek word "φύσις" (natura), in the Leonine passage of the final Definition the word "ὑπόστασις" is identified semantically with the Greek word "πρόσωπον" (person), as in the *Third Letter* of Cyril *to Nestorius*, in order that it obtains an ontological meaning and in this way its Nestorian understanding may be excluded. In any event, after all these modifications the Leonine passage in the Definition lost its initial character and obtained—mainly in verse 20—so obvious a Cyrillian character, that Sellers

cannot even entertain the notion that it comes from Leo's *Tome*, and for this reason he believes that this verse comes basically from Cyril![83]

*Conclusion*

After all that has been said, it is evident that both the main and basic sources of the Definition of Chalcedon are the following: the *Letter* of Cyril *to John of Antioch*, his *Second* and *Third Letters to Nestorius*, Leo's *Tome* and the biblical passage *Hebr*. 4,15. Therefore the view that the Definition of Chalcedon is a mosaic of different or opposite Christological tendencies of the 5th century is oversimplified and misleading. As has been proved, not only the verses which came directly from Cyril, but also those which came from modifications and additions to the original Definition stand witness to the fact that that the Chalcedonian Definition has a completely Cyrillian character. Certainly there is a synthesis of Alexandrine, Antiochian and Western Christological elements in the Definition, but this synthesis was made completely within the framework of Cyril's Christology. No Christological element was accepted in the Definition by either the committees of composition or revision, unless it had been completely adjusted to harmonize with his Christological teaching: the Formulary of Reunion was not accepted in the Definition in its Antiochian form, although it was approved by Cyril in this very form, but was interpreted on the basis of the Second and Third Letters of Cyril to Nestorius and his Letter to John of Antioch. The dyophysite formula of Basil of Seleucia was preferred to that proposed by the imperial representatives, because it comes from the Letter of Cyril to John of Antioch and it is in absolute agreement with his Christological teaching. The four adverbs in the dyophysite formula of the Definition were accepted not only because they express laconically the anti-monophysite and anti-nestorian teaching of Cyril, but also because they—at least the first three of them—were used mot à mot by Cyril himself. Finally, the Leonine passage was included in the Definition, because it is parallel with the passage from the Second Letter of Cyril to Nestorius which there existed, as we believe, in the original Definition and despite this, as we have seen, it was modified, in order to obtain an obvious Cyrillian character. In other words, care was taken, especially in the final Definition, that even the Christological elements which did not come directly from Cyril agree completely with his Christological teaching and express it faithfully.

This conclusion has a great historico-dogmatic significance because it stresses the unity of the Cyrillian Christology with that of Chalcedon and by extension the dogmatic agreement and unity of the Ecumenical Councils which were concerned with the Christological question. It also has great ecclesiastical significance because it opens new horizons and perspectives for the promotion of the theological dialogue between Orthodox and non-Chalcedonians. In other words the identification of the Cyrillian character of the Chalcedonian Definition does not only create the presupposition for the successful progress and outcome of the theological dialogue between Orthodox and non-Chalcedonians; it also stresses at the same time the perennial value of the Cyrillian Christology for the

[83] See *op. cit.*, 220f.

formulation of the Christological doctrine, revealing in this way Cyril to be in fact an Ecumenical teacher of the Church.

# Cyril of Alexandria's *Mia-physis* Formula in the Christological Debates of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries[1]

*Norman Russell*

Of all the documents forged or reattributed in antiquity none has cast such a long shadow as the statement of faith delivered by Apollinarius of Laodicea to the Emperor Jovian in 363, a statement that contains the phrase *mia physis tou Theou logou sesarkomene*, "one incarnate nature of God the Word". Under the impression that this phrase, known conventionally as the *mia-physis* formula, enjoyed the support of the Fathers, Eastern Christians who opposed the "two natures" Definition of the Council of Chalcedon (the Fourth Ecumenical Council of 451) made it the slogan that distinguished them from those who accepted the teaching of that Council—hence their modern designation, "miaphysites".[2] During the hundred years between the Fourth and the Fifth Ecumenical Councils (Chalcedon, 451 to Constantinople II, 553), a number of theologians, both miaphysites and Chalcedonians, reflected at length on the phrase, seeking either to reconcile it with Chalcedon's statement that Christ is "acknowledged in two natures", or to demonstrate that any profession of two natures is excluded by the *mia-physis* formula as crypto-Nestorian. In this essay we shall follow the arguments of some of the leading representatives of both sides until the decision of the Emperor Justinian and the Fathers of the Fifth Ecumenical Council of 553 to uphold Chalcedon made any further attempt to reconcile the miaphysites almost pointless and resulted in the hardening of the division between the imperial Church and the Oriental Orthodox that has endured to this day.

## *The Apollinarian Origins of "One Incarnate Nature"*

When a theologian was condemned as a heretic in the early Christian Empire, one way in which his admirers might seek to preserve his writings was by attributing them to another author, preferably one whose orthodoxy was universally regarded as unimpeachable. It was thus that the confession of faith made by Apollinarius to Jovian came to be lodged in the archives of the Church of Alexandria under the name of Athanasius.[3] As a supposedly Athanasian

[1] I am grateful to Dr. Sebastian Brock for responding to my questions on the Syriac versions and to Dr. Hans van Loon and Professor Richard Price for reading earlier drafts of this essay and making many valuable suggestions for its improvement.

[2] The older term, "monophysites", dating from the seventh century, is now regarded as pejorative.

[3] Text in Hans Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule*: *Texte und Untersuchungen* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1904), 251-253. It could conceivably have been brought back to Alexandria by Athanasius himself. He was at Edessa where the declaration was made and considered Apollinarius a close ally in the fight against Arianism. Athanasius died in 373 before Apollinarius came under censure for doctrinal error.

statement, it carried enormous authority. It was not until the 530s that it was exposed as an Apollinarian forgery, but its use by a Father of Cyril's stature meant that it could not then simply be dropped.

Apollinarius was condemned by synods held in Rome and Antioch, in 377 and 379 respectively, for maintaining that in Christ the place of a rational soul was taken by the Word, and the condemnation was upheld by the Second Ecumenical Council (Constantinople I, 381).[4] Apollinarius, whose chief concern was to counter the Christological duality taught by the followers of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, held that through his *kenosis*, or self-emptying, the divine Word accommodated himself to the limitations of human life without undergoing any change so that he could effect our salvation by restoring the divine likeness in us. A human being assumed by the Word, such as Diodore and Theodore taught, could not save us. Only the Word himself could do that by enabling us to participate in his deified humanity. But how is the incarnate Word to be considered a single subject? Apollinarius was led by his logical rigor to deny that Christ had a rational soul. Every human intellect is self-determining because it possesses a will. Christ could not consist of two self-determining elements, each endowed with a self-complete intellect (*noeras autoteleis*).[5] The place of a rational soul in Christ was taken by the Word.

This aspect of his thought is not evident in *Ad Jovianum*. Here Apollinarius offers a perfectly acceptable statement of faith in which Christ is presented as "Son of God according to the Spirit" and "Son of Man according to the flesh", the one Son not having two natures, "one to be venerated and the other not to be venerated, but a single nature of God the Word, [the nature] made flesh and venerated with his flesh through a single veneration".[6] There are not two sons, one from Mary not to be venerated and the other from God to be venerated, but a single Son born according to the flesh from Mary, who (by the *communicatio idiomatum* or "communication of idioms")[7] is rightly called "Theotokos", "she who gave birth to God". Elsewhere, Apollinarius states that this one Son "is consubstantial with God [the Father] by the invisible Spirit (...) and again consubstantial with human beings".[8] He is the first to state the consubstantiality of the Son with humanity explicitly. Both these positions, on

[4] A Roman condemnation did not carry much weight in the East in this period. What influenced the 153 bishops who gathered at Antioch in 379 was the denunciation of Apollinarius by Epiphanius in his recently published heresiological work, the *Panarion*.

[5] *Ad Iulianum*, frag. 152; Lietzmann, *Apollinaris*, 248.9–13.

[6] *Ad Iovianum*; Lietzmann, *Apollinaris*, 250.7–251.3. The document is orthodox in that although there is no mention of a rational soul in Christ, there no denial of it either.

[7] This is the principle whereby the properties (*idiomata*) of the divine nature may be predicated of the human nature and *vice versa*. The expression itself (in Greek ἀντίδοσις ἰδιωμάτων) is later than Apollinarius, only becoming established in the sixth century. One of its earliest uses is by Leontius of Jerusalem (*Aporiae* 25, PG 86, 1785C, ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 190–1). Severus of Antioch also takes it up, carefully explaining its meaning in his first letter to Sergius (*Letter I*, CSCO 119, 79; trans. Iain Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*: *Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998), 151–2).

[8] *De Unione*, 8; Lietzmann, *Apollinaris*, 188. 9–12.

the oneness of the incarnate Word and his consubstantiality with us as well as with the Father, were to be fundamental to subsequent Orthodoxy.[9]

*Cyril of Alexandria's Appropriation of the Formula*

Cyril of Alexandria came across this passage when he was compiling a dossier of patristic witnesses to the term "Theotokos".[10] At the end of 428 Nestorius, the then Patriarch of Constantinople, was asked to give a ruling on the theological propriety of the term "Theotokos". He disliked the term, preferring to call Mary "Christotokos", "she who gave birth to Christ". The resulting theological dispute came to Cyril's ears in Alexandria. He was deeply disturbed by what he was told, for Nestorius seemed to be making a radical distinction between the Son of God and the Son of Mary. When a copy of Nestorius' sermons on the subject was forwarded to him, he set to work on a detailed rebuttal. This was *Against Nestorius*, a long work refuting the offending sermons phrase by phrase. In the same year (430) he wrote three shorter treatises addressed to the Emperor Theodosius II, to his sister Pulcheria and wife Eudocia, and to the princesses Arcadia and Marina. The treatise addressed to the princesses contains a florilegium of texts from earlier Fathers supporting the use of "Theotokos", one of them being Apollinarius' *mia-physis* passage, which Cyril took to be by Athanasius.[11] In this context it is the testimony to the word "Theotokos" that interests Cyril. The *mia-physis* phrase is only incidental. But the phrase appears again in *Against Nestorius*, and this time receives some theological consideration.[12] Cyril objects to Nestorius' presentation of the Incarnation as amounting to no more than 'the Word of God dwelling in Christ by participation as in an ordinary man'. Cyril goes on to say:

> But how is it not beyond dispute by anyone that the only begotten, being God by nature, became man, not simply by a conjunction, as he himself says, that is conceived of as external or incidental, but by a true union that is ineffable and transcends understanding? In this way he is conceived of as one and only and every word befits him and everything will be said as from one person. For the incarnate nature of the Word is immediately conceived of as one after the union.[13]

Cyril goes on at once to draw an analogy between soul and body in a human being and Word and flesh in Christ. He is careful to exclude any Apollinarian interpretation of the analogy by stating that "the body united to

[9] For a positive evaluation of Apollinarius' contribution to Orthodoxy, see Mark Edwards, *Catholicity and Heresy in the Early Church* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), chapter 6, esp. 152–5.

[10] Cyril seems to have been the first father to have assembled lists of patristic proof texts. He was to use them to good effect at the Council of Ephesus (431).

[11] Cyril would have been horrified to know he had quoted Apollinarius: "I have never entertained the views of Arius and Apollinarius", *Letter to Acacius of Melitene*, 20; trans. L. R. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*: *Select Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 57.

[12] For a full examination of the use of *mia physis* by Cyril, see Hans van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), esp. 518–30.

[13] II Prooem, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, ed. Eduard Schwartz (Berlin/Leipzig: de Gruyter, 1927–9) I, 1, 6, 33; trans. Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 142.

God the Word is endowed with a rational soul".[14] But the analogy is useful in suggesting how two such disparate elements as Word and flesh could form a single subject of Christ's words and acts as fully as body and soul form a single human being.

Later, in his response to Andrew of Samosata's critique of the anathemas of his third letter to Nestorius, Cyril repeats the same testimony from Apollinarius that he had included in his letter to the princesses. These are the only instances of "one incarnate nature" in Cyril's writings before 433, when Cyril accepted the Formula of Reunion proposed by John of Antioch in order to bring peace to the Churches after the Council of Ephesus (431) and in consequence had to reassure some of his more hard-line supporters that he had not backtracked on his earlier position.[15] The *mia-physis* formula is not exploited any earlier.[16] Even in the *Third Letter to Nestorius*, where Cyril is stating his position on the Incarnation in a particularly uncompromising fashion, he speaks only of "the one incarnate *hypostasis* of the Word".[17] There is no mention here of "one *nature*". Only after 433 does he seize on the formula's potential for emphasizing the oneness of Christ after the Incarnation.

When he writes to Acacius of Melitene in the aftermath of the restoration of communion with Antioch in 433, Cyril counters the duality of Nestorius' Christ (a "personally distinct Word of God" who is called Christ but also has a "continuous connection with Christ") by insisting that "when we have the idea of the elements of the one and unique Son and Lord Jesus Christ, we speak of two natures being united; but after the union, the duality has been abolished and we believe the Son's nature to be one, since he is one Son, yet become man and incarnate".[18] To Eulogius, his *apocrisiarius* (official representative) in Constantinople, Cyril gives brief instructions on how the Formula of Reunion is to be interpreted. Nestorius' "two natures" fails to affirm the union. "We unite these, acknowledging one Christ, one Son, the same one Lord and, further, one incarnate nature of the Son in the same way that the phrase can be used of ordinary man".[19]

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Van Loon also draws attention to a fourth instance in the treatise that responds to Andrew of Samosata (known as the *Apologeticus contra Orientales*), but here, although Cyril speaks of "one nature" in a christological context, there is no direct use of the *mia-physis* formula (*Dyophysite Christology*, 523).

[16] Van Loon protests against the frequently repeated statement that the *mia physis* phrase was Cyril's "favourite formula" and rightly concludes that "although miaphysite terminology increased after the reunion with the Orientals, this was especially due to the questions raised by the partisans in his own party, to which he responded in his letters" (*Dyophysite Christology*, 530). It was recognized, however, as early as the sixth century (by John the Grammarian, for example) that after the reunion with the Orientals Cyril did appropriate the *mia-physis* formula and make it his own, using it in conjunction with the two-natures formula. On this see Aloys Grillmeier with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ* in *Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century* (London/Louisville, KY: Mowbray and Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 68.

[17] *Third Letter to Nestorius*, 8; Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 24.16.

[18] *To Acacius*, 12; trans. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 49.

[19] *To Eulogius*; trans. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 63.

It is in the two letters to the Cilician bishop Succensus, however, that Cyril makes most use of the *mia-physis* formula. There are not two different Sons, he says, one the Son of God, the other born of Mary. The two natures have met in Christ "without merger and without alteration in unbreakable mutual union".[20] Apollinarianism is repudiated—the Word united to himself a body endowed with a rational soul[21]—but "after the union we do not divide the natures from each other and do not sever the one and indivisible into two sons but say 'one Son' and, as the Fathers have put it, 'one incarnate nature of the Word'".[22] We should note how Cyril introduces the *mia-physis* formula as something already established in the patristic tradition. And once again, as in *Against Nestorius* of three years previously, he illustrates what he means by the soul-body analogy. Soul and body are not the same thing, "yet the pair yields a single united human being".[23] The word *physis* clearly has different meanings in Cyril according to context. When construed with the qualifier "one" it always refers to the divine nature.[24] When narrowed down further in the *mia-physis* formula by the addition of the phrase "of God the Word". it refers specifically to the second person of the Trinity. The final past participle, "incarnate" (or "enfleshed"), refers to the *hypostasis* of the Word plus the flesh. It is this reason that Cyril can also –but much more rarely[25]– speak of "the one incarnate *hypostasis* of the Word".[26]

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[20] *First Letter to Succensus*, 6; trans. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 75.

[21] Ibid., 5; Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 74.8-9.

[22] Ibid., 7; trans. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 75-7.

[23] Ibid., 7; trans. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 77.

[24] Van Loon, who is hostile to a miaphysite interpretation of Cyril, has noted that "throughout Cyril's writings, the phrase 'one nature' occurs many times with reference to the nature of the three divine hypostases: the one nature of the Godhead" (*Dyophysite Christology*, 522, fn. 42).

[25] Van Loon locates only two instances, once in *Against Nestorius* and once in the *Third Letter to Nestorius*; ibid., 509.

[26] *Third Letter to Nestorius*, 8; Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 24.16. Richard Price maintains that "the one hypostasis for Cyril was not a product but the subject of the union", and he goes on to say that in the West, as Studer first pointed out, this was understood in the opposite sense (Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), vol. 1, 70.) In his recent comments to me Price has added the following clarification: "Although the West did not understand the 'one hypostasis' formula to specify the subject of the attribution—and the same is true of 'one person' (always used by Leo, as by Augustine, simply to express the truth of the union of natures), this doesn't mean that they had any doubts about the Word being the one personal subject in Christ (e.g. note in Leo's Tome 'totus in suis, totus in nostris' ['complete in what is his own and complete in what is ours']). But they didn't use 'one hypostasis' or 'una persona' to express this". Van Loon dissents from this view, holding with Grillmeier that in the Definition of Chalcedon the "one hypostasis" is the *result* of the union. He has commented to me: "It is only after Chalcedon that the neo-Chalcedonians equalled the hypostasis of the incarnate Word with the hypostasis of the Word before the incarnation, and thus made the hypostasis into the subject of the incarnation". Despite the distinctions which Van Loon discerns in Cyril's use of "hypostasis" depending on whether the context is Trinitarian or Christological (*Dyophysite Christology*, 372–7), I am more inclined to agree with Price. The so-called neo-Chalcedonians were in my view simply Cyrillians who drew out the implications of Cyril's Christology in reaction to miaphysite objections to Chalcedon.

"Nature" and "*hypostasis*" here are almost identical in meaning.[27]

*Eutyches' Version of the Formula*

After Cyril's death in 444, some of his partisans were not as circumspect in their use of the *mia-physis* formula as Cyril himself was. Nor did they distinguish between the different uses of *physis*. The Constantinopolitan archimandrite Eutyches renewed the controversy that had followed Ephesus by claiming that in Christ there were two natures before the union but only one after it. Within this single nature Christ's flesh was wholly divinised and assimilated to the Word.[28] When examined by the Home Synod of Constantinople in 448 he had the greatest difficulty in admitting the double consubstantiality of Christ—that is to say, that Christ was consubstantial with us as well as with the Father—but under pressure he did do so.[29] He was nevertheless condemned by the Home Synod under Flavian for supposedly denying Christ's true humanity but supported by Cyril's successor at Alexandria, the Patriarch Dioscorus. At the Second Council of Ephesus, held in 449 under Dioscorus' leadership to resolve the dispute, Eutyches was exonerated and Flavian deposed. But the sudden death of Theodosius II in 450 and the accession of Marcian led to a change of imperial policy. Pope Leo I had strongly supported Flavian and had sent him a brief Christological treatise or "tome". In the East Leo's *Tome* came to be widely regarded as Nestorian in outlook because of the distinction it draws between the activities of the Word and those of the body in the incarnate Christ—"the Word achieving what is the Word's, while the body accomplishes what is the body's"—and its emphatic rejection of only one nature after the union.[30] Dioscorus condemned the *Tome* and excommunicated Leo. But after the death of Theodosius he no longer enjoyed imperial support. Marcian called a new Council, held at Chalcedon in 451, which reversed the decision of 449 and issued a Definition of Faith which took some phrases from Leo's *Tome* but set them within a fundamentally Cyrillian perspective.[31] The expression that was later to

[27] Almost, but not quite, identical because "one nature" before the mention of "God the Word" refers to what the three hypostases of the Trinity have in common. Van Loon, on the other hand, stresses the difference between *physis* and *hypostasis* when applied to the incarnate Word: "The meaning of the word *physis* in the *mia physis* formula is not simply that of a separate reality, since as the composition of two individual natures it includes the essences of these components. It is thus not synonymous with hypostasis in the 'one hypostasis' formula" (*Dyophysite Christology*, 390).

[28] This was not in itself heretical. Cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, who in *Oration* 38, 13 speaks of Christ as "a union of two opposites", one of which actively deified, while the other "was the recipient of deification".

[29] Price and Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, 25–30 and 221–4.

[30] Price and Gaddis, ibid., vol. 2, 19 and 23.

[31] The conventional view is still that Chalcedon's Definition is based on Leo's Tome. Richard Price has kindly summed up his judgement on this matter for me in the following words: "It is significant that the Definition praises Cyril for providing the perfect exposition of the Nicene Faith but compliments the Tome simply for being a 'pillar' against heresy. The Fathers had no interest in the positive teaching of the Tome (see Price, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, 67) and had only approved of it in Session IV for being in agreement with Cyril. If indeed the phrase 'coming together into one person and hypostasis' echoes the Tome, it makes significant changes to it so as to make it Cyrillian (see Price, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 2, 17, fn. 43)".

give most offence to the anti-Chalcedonians, however, "acknowledged in two natures", was not in fact Leonine but was proposed by Basil of Seleucia on the basis of the opening words of the Formula of Reunion agreed between Cyril and John of Antioch in 433.[32] Flavian, who had since died was posthumously rehabilitated and Dioscorus was deposed. Proterius, Dioscorus' archpriest at Alexandria, who was prepared to accept the Definition, was appointed in his place.

*Timothy Aelurus' Analysis of "One Incarnate Nature"*

The first anti-Chalcedonian Patriarch after Dioscorus (Proterius having been murdered during the disturbances following the death of the emperor Marcian in 457) was Timothy Aelurus. Timothy was deposed in 460 by the new Emperor Leo, but from his exile in the Crimea wrote a number of letters explaining his opposition to Chalcedon's Definition. For him the most reliable guide to Orthodoxy was Cyril's *Second Letter to Succensus*, where Cyril explains the sense of *mia physis sesarkomene*, referring to the body-soul analogy and insisting that the difference between the natures does not indicate separate realities but exists only by mental analysis (*en theoria*).[33] Timothy was struck by the asymmetry of the two natures. The Word's divinity, which existed from all eternity, was not on a par with his humanity, which had a temporal origin. The Incarnation belongs to the economic order not the eternal order of reality. Christ's "nature" is therefore "only the divinity which also became flesh without transformation".[34] The qualified noun *mia physis* refers to the divinity and the past participle *sesarkomene* to the economic act of the Incarnation. Ironically, it was Basil of Seleucia—the same Basil who contributed "acknowledged in two natures" to Chalcedon's Definition—who first pointed the way to this interpretation.[35] Timothy's exposition of the *mia-physis* formula was to become normative for opponents of

[32] This was argued by André de Halleux in "La définition christologique à Chalcédoine," *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 7 (1976): 3–23, 155–70 and has been accepted by, among others, Aloys Grillmeier and Richard Price.

[33] For analyses of the miaphysites' use of the *mia-physis* formula see Joseph Lebon, "La christologie du monophysisme syrien," in, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* eds. Aloys Grillmeier and Heinrich Bacht (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1951), vol. 1, 425–580, esp. 478–91; Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 153–62.

[34] Timothy Aelurus, *Contra eos qui dicunt duas naturas*, Br. L. Add. 12156, fol. 19vb; cited and trans. Aloys Grillmeier with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 4, *The Church of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia after 451* (London/Louisville, KY: Mowbray and Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 32.

[35] When accused at the Second Council of Ephesus (449) of teaching two natures after the union, Basil of Seleucia said: "This statement that they say I made I did not make in these words. I am not aware of having said this; but when the monk [Eutyches] said 'I say that the Lord Jesus Christ is from two natures, but after the union I affirm one nature'—without the addition of 'enfleshed and made man'—I remember that I said, 'If you say "from two natures" but after the union say "one nature," without adding "enfleshed and made man", you incur the suspicion of implying confusion and mixture; but if you add "enfleshed and made man", you say the same as our fathers, for it is clear that according to the teaching of the fathers his Godhead, that is, of the one Lord Jesus Christ, is one thing and the flesh from his mother is another'". Price and Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, 224.

Chalcedon and also influenced its supporters. Each side, however, drew different conclusions about its implications for the reception of Chalcedon.

*Severus of Antioch's Struggles Against Both Chalcedonians and Eutychians*

On the miaphysite side, Timothy's approach was taken up and developed in the next generation by the most formidable of all the anti-Chalcedonian theologians, Severus of Antioch. Severus devoted most of his eventful life as monk in Palestine, polemicist at Constantinople, Patriarch of Antioch from 512 until deposed in 518, and indefatigable partisan of miaphysite Christology for his remaining twenty years, to maintaining his version of Cyrillian Orthodoxy against both Chalcedonians and Eutychians. He had an intimate knowledge of the full range of Cyril's writings but it was the *mia-physis* formula that he took to encapsulate the essence of Cyril's thinking. With this formula as his standard, he maintained a consistently miaphysite line against Chalcedonians on the one side, such as the anonymous author of the *Florilegium Cyrillianum* and John the Grammarian, and Eutychians on the other, such as Sergius the Grammarian and Julian of Halicarnassus. In the polemical works he wrote against these opponents he brought the Christological debate that followed Chalcedon to a new level of sophistication.[36]

The *Florilegium Cyrillianum* was an impressive work of scholarship designed to show that Chalcedon was in line with Cyril. The author had gone through the entire corpus of Cyril's works excerpting passages (244 of them) which clearly assumed a dyophysite framework of reference. In response to this florilegium Severus wrote his *Philalethes* (the "lover of truth" of the title being Cyril of Alexandria), in which he takes each excerpt and reinterprets it from a miaphysite perspective. Severus was fully conscious of how rare the *mia-physis* formula is in Cyril's voluminous works. Nevertheless, it remains for him the key to his thinking.

> For the hypostatic union means these two things: that there has been a union of two or more realities to become one and the same thing, and that this from this time on no longer breaks up into them [the elements] which have naturally united, for they have united to become a single being. For in fact these elements which have naturally united no longer subsist in the isolation of their own subsistence, but are obviously in a single nature and a single *hypostasis*; they allow only the starting-point to appear from which the single being is

[36] Severus's works survive chiefly in Syriac translations, the original Greek having been lost after his condemnation by Justinian in 536. They have been published mainly in two series, the Patrologia Orientalis and the Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scriptores Syri [hereafter CSCO], with selections in English in Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon* and Pauline Allen and C. T. R. Hayward, *Severus of Antioch* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2004). The classic work on Severus is Joseph Lebon, *Le monophysisme sévérien* (Louvain, 1909); also important are Martin Jugie, "Monophysisme," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 10, part 2 (1929): 2216–51, Gustave Bardy, "Sévère d'Antioche," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 14, part 2 (1941): 1988–2000, Lebon, "La christologie du monophysisme syrien," and, especially, Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 21–175.

constituted, because they have been united without mingling and thus escape division into two or more.[37]

"One nature" for Severus signified a single separate reality. Like Cyril, Severus appeals to the body-soul image to indicate what he means by a single nature or *hypostasis* arising out of two. But he strengthens the image, making it more an exact description than an analogy. The Word and the flesh—the ensouled flesh, for Severus explicitly rejects the Apollinarian solution to the problem of Christ's unity—form a hypostatic unity, a single entity. Because he consistently equates "nature" with "*hypostasis*" Severus cannot speak of two natures that continue to exist after the union. For him "two natures" can only imply a Nestorian duality, two beings—the Word and the assumed man—co-existing by a loose juxtaposition or *synapheia*. For Cyril, the Word had appropriated a created nature as his own.[38] Severus goes further: the flesh "had been constituted for him [the Word], without ever being separated from him".[39] He intensifies the dynamic character of the *henosis* we find in Cyril, the act of union with the flesh being a personal act of the Word as he makes the flesh his own.

The author of the *Florilegium Cyrillianum* is content to demonstrate that Cyril's normal practice in Christological discourse is to use two-nature language. John the Grammarian, a priest and Homeric scholar of Caesarea (whether of Cappadocia or of Palestine is not certain), set himself the task of proving not only that the *mia-physis* formula was compatible with Chalcedon's dyophysite Christology but also that both approaches were necessary in order to do full justice to the truth by excluding Nestorian interpretations on the one hand and Apollinarian on the other.[40] John knew that for Severus and his followers it was axiomatic that there could be no "nature" without its corresponding *prosopon*—

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[37] Severus of Antioch, *Philalethes* No. 42, Apologia (CSCO 134, 213.19-31); cited and trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 35.

[38] This is not to say that an individual created nature existed before the Word made it his own. Van Loon would phrase this point differently to avoid any suggestion of Nestorianism. He says in a comment to me: "I think that Cyril already taught what you ascribe to Severus here, viz., 'the act of union with the flesh being a personal act of the Word as he makes the flesh his own'. More in general I write several times that, according to Cyril, the Word assumed the common human nature and in doing so (at the same time) became an individual human being (cf. *Dyophysite Christology*, 169, 171, 173)".

[39] Severus of Antioch, *Philalethes* On the two-natures formula (CSCO 134, 108.8-12; cited and trans. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 38.

[40] A dissenting view has been expressed by Karl-Heinz Uthemann, who attributes such an approach only to Theodore of Raithu ("Der Neuchalkedonismus als Vorbereitung des Monotheismus. Ein Beitrag zum eigentlichen Anliegen des Neuchalkedonismus," *Studia Patristica* 29 (1996): 373–413, esp. 376–7; cited Van Loon, *Dyophysite Christology*, 38). John the Grammarian's *Apologia concilii Chalcedonensis* has been excerpted from the Syriac of Severus of Antioch's refutation and published in a modern Latin translation along with some Greek fragments by M. Richard, Corpus Christianorum, series graeca, 1 (Latin version, 6-46; Greek fragments, 49-58). On John see further Charles Moeller, "Le chalcédonisme et le néo-chalcédonisme en Orient de 451 à la fin du VI$^{e}$ siècle," in, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, eds. Grillmeier and Bacht 637–720, esp. 672–676; Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 52–69. According to Moeller, the *Apologia* is to be dated to between 512 and 518.

"person" in the sense of "external representation" (*ouk esti physis aprosopos*).[41] "Two natures" in Christ for the *Severans* entailed two *prosopa*—which was the Nestorian position. To overcome this problem John draws on the concept of *ousia*, or "essence," as developed by Basil of Caesarea in the context of his Trinitarian refutation of Eunomius. *Ousia* in Basil is more general than *physis*; it does not carry the same connotations of an independent entity. If *ousia* could be understood to represent the meaning of *physis* in Chalcedon's Christological formula "acknowledged in two natures", a duality of two implied *prosopa* would be avoided. John's next move is to relate this to the concept of *enhypostaton*.[42] The word *hypostasis* itself is roughly synonymous with *ousia*, both being used to indicate something that actually exists. And John is aware that in the third anathema of his Third Letter to Nestorius Cyril himself can speak of Christ's humanity and divinity as two hypostases.[43] The human *ousia* of Christ is the same as that of all other human beings until it is appropriated or actualized ("hypostatized") by the Word and endowed with his own *idiomata*, or characteristics. The *enhypostaton* is that which actually exists as the specific *hypostasis* or person. The "hypostatic union" is thus the bond that makes the Word and the flesh a single subject. If the *mia-physis* formula is seen in this light, it is perfectly compatible with a dyophysite schema. "One nature" simply means the divine *ousia* which has become incarnate, the Word with the flesh forming a single subject or *hypostasis* through the hypostatic union.

Severus was not impressed by John's attempt to find complementary insights into the truth in apparently contradictory phrases. Against the *Apologia* he argues that Cyril and the Orientals did not come to an agreement in 433 on the acceptability of the *mia-physis* formula. In his view Cyril's "one nature" and Chalcedon's "two natures" remain mutually exclusive; those who maintain otherwise "are saying that to become united and not to become united are the same thing".[44] Dialectical arguments that try to establish the equipollence of "one incarnate nature of the Word" and "acknowledged in two natures" are a waste of time. And it is no use claiming that earlier Fathers and even Cyril himself had used two-natures language. Before the controversy with Nestorius, Cyril had spoken of the union of the two natures as a *synapheia*, a conjunction. But after the outbreak of the controversy he had avoided this term as henceforth open to interpretation in a Nestorian sense.[45] The "coarser language" (*lingua crassior*) of a

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[41] John the Grammarian, *Apologia* IV. 2: Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, 1, I. 2, p. 53, 121-2; cited Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 61, n. 107.

[42] *Enhypostaton* means not "existing within", as has been thought, but simply "existent". This was demonstrated by Brian Daley, "The Origenism of Leontius of Byzantium," *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1976): 333–69. See also U. M. Lang, "Anhypostatos–Enhypostatos: Church Fathers, Protestant Orthodoxy and Karl Barth," *Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1998): 630–57.

[43] Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 28, 29.

[44] Severus of Antioch, *Contra impium Grammaticum*, *Or*. III. 1, 12: CSCO 94, 156.13: 'idemque dicunt esse uniri et non uniri' (in Lebon's Latin translation); cited Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 69, fn. 142.

[45] See Severus of Antioch, *Contra impium* Grammaticum, *Or*. III. 2, 23: CSCO 102, 17.10-14 in Lebon's Latin translation, and for this passage in English: Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 75.

previous generation had to be refined in order to counter new theological errors, or offer remedies for new diseases, as Severus put it.[46] Theological language had constantly to be adjusted in the light of fresh circumstances. Even though for Severus Cyril was "the king of dogmas", the great Alexandrian's linguistic usage was not to be followed in a slavish fashion.

If Severus was intransigent in defending the exclusivity of the *mia-physis* formula against Chalcedonian opponents, he was equally firm in combating the extremists of his own party. The latter were theologians as committed as Severus to opposing the dyophysite Christology of Chalcedon but much less sensitive to the dangers of Eutychianism.[47] One such opponent was a layman, a Grammarian like John of Caesarea, called Sergius. An exchange of letters between them survives in Syriac.[48] This epistolary debate focuses on the precise terminology best suited to expressing the nature of the union between the divine and the human in Christ. Sergius had encountered in a text of one Antoninus of Aleppo what he took to be a sound Christological statement: "We do not speak of two natures or proprieties after the inexpressible union". This, he found, had been corrected by Severus, to "we do not speak of divided proprieties", which seemed to him unacceptable because two proprieties entailed two *ousiai*.[49] In his reply Severus insists that we should differentiate between difference and duality: "we do not refuse to confess the difference" between the two natures, but we do refuse to "divide the one Christ in a duality of natures after the union".[50] In his justification of this assertion he presents an interesting variation of the *mia-physis* formula. As a result of the hypostatic union, Christ is "one person, one *hypostasis*, one nature belonging to the Word incarnate", the flesh acquiring the properties of the Word, and the Word the properties of the flesh, by the *communicatio idiomatum*.[51] Severus goes on to quote from Cyril's *Against Nestorius* in support of what he has said, but in Cyril (as in Ps.-Athanasius) the word "incarnate" is feminine, qualifying "nature". Now—if "incarnate" was indeed masculine in Severus' original Greek—it qualifies "Word".[52] Why the change?

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[46] Severus of Antioch, *Contra impium Grammaticum*, *Or*. III. 2, 27: CSCO 102, 49.35-50.3.

[47] Eutyches was not condemned by name at Chalcedon. But his name came to stand for the view that after the union of the divine and human natures at the Incarnation, the product was a third reality (a *tertium quid*) which was neither purely divine nor fully human.

[48] The correspondence, which was originally in Greek, was edited in 1949 by Lebon, CSCO 119 (Syriac text) and 120 (version). There is an English translation with a useful introduction by Iain Torrance.

[49] Sergius, *Letter I*: CSCO 119, 71; trans. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*, 143.

[50] Severus of Antioch, *Letter I*, CSCO 119, 79; trans. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*, 150–151.

[51] Severus of Antioch, *Letter I*, CSCO 119, 79; trans. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*, 151.

[52] I am relying here on Torrance's English translation, but, as Lebon has pointed out, "nature" is masculine in Syriac, so it is difficult to tell whether "incarnate" is to be construed with "nature" or with "the Word." In his 1909 study on Severus Lebon doubted whether Severus ever used the version with "incarnate" in the masculine, but eventually found reliable evidence that on at least two occasions he did so. See Lebon, "La christologie du monophysisme syrien," 480, fn. 70, with the Greek fragment quoted there.

The answer becomes apparent in Sergius' Second Letter. St. Gregory the Theologian teaches a mingling of the natures, which he calls *symphyia*.[53] Sergius takes this to mean that the natures are not just juxtaposed but "are utterly mingled to (become) one image and one *hypostasis*". The *mia-physis* formula safeguards this teaching, which the dyophysite opposition, he claims, interprets wrongly.

> For they say they speak of one nature of the Word, but in the word "incarnate" there is seen a mark of the other (nature): not that the Word has joined this to itself hypostatically, and thus there is naturally one from two, but that, so they babble, an accidental union has taken place, (the word) 'incarnate' being a token of a nature standing in its own right.[54]

Timothy Aelurus had been happy to claim that the *mia physis* was the divine nature while *sesarkomene* referred to the economy of the Incarnation. But the Chalcedonians were using the two expressions, "one nature" and "incarnate" to imply two natures, taking *mia physis* to indicate the divine nature and *sesarkomene* the human. If the feminine past participle *sesarkomene* were to be turned into a masculine, however, and thus attached grammatically to the Word (*Logos*), it would refer solely to the action of the Word in assuming flesh. This is what Severus seems to do in his reply to Sergius' Second Letter.

Did Severus therefore abandon the *mia-physis* formula in favour of its modified version? No, in the knowledge that the formula was being used by his dyophysite opponents to support their own arguments, he seems to use both versions together, the second version clarifying the meaning of the first.[55] In the earliest of his polemical works, a treatise addressed to the Chalcedonian zealot Nephalius, he argues against a dyophysite interpretation of the *mia-physis* formula in strictly Cyrillian terms.[56] In the *Philalethes*, a little later, he goes on to argue on the basis of Cyril's First Letter to Succensus that "St. Cyril was affirming that from the union of the two natures there came about one nature of

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[53] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letter 101 To Cledonius*, PG 37, 181C. Richard Price has kindly informed me that the proper meaning of *symphyia* (more often in its adjectival or adverbial form) was the notion of two things forming a continuous whole without division. The word was to be taken up by St. Maximus the Confessor and applied to the union of will and operation in Christ.

[54] Sergius, *Letter II*, CSCO 119, 99–100; trans. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*, 167.

[55] There is some justification, if not an exact precedent, in Cyril for the second version. *Sesarkomenos* is used instead of *sesarkomene*, for example, in *On the Unity of Christ* (Sources Chrétiennes 97, 376. 40-41; 736e) and in *To Acacius of Melitene*, 12 (Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria*, 48.25). The precedent is not exact because in these examples "incarnate" is attached to "the Son" not "the Word". Van Loon, in correspondence with me, is unwilling to admit any justification in Cyril's usage for Severus' distinction: "I do not agree with the interpretation of the formula according to which *physis* refers to the divine nature and *sesarkomene/os* refers to the human nature. I think that *physis* in the formula is the combination of the divine and human natures in Christ". If one accepts Van Loon's analysis, Severus' distinction would seem to have been prompted by Cyril's equivocal use of *physis*. "The idea of an individual divine nature", says Van Loon, "is implied by Cyril's way of speaking about Christ but it creates tension with his Trinitarian teaching that there is only one divine nature. I mention this in *Dyophysite Christology*, 516".

[56] See Severus of Antioch, *Ad Nephalium*, *Or*. II, CSCO 64, 19-21; trans. Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 64–5.

the Word not, however, of the discarnate Word, but of the Word incarnate".[57] From now on the masculine form of "incarnate" can apparently be attached to "the Word" as a gloss on what Cyril meant by "incarnate" in the feminine attached to "nature". Commenting, for example, on a passage from Cyril's Letter to Eulogius adduced by the *Florilegium Cyrillianum* to show that Cyril, in anti-Apollinarian mode, can emphasize a duality of natures, Severus says "it is plainly demonstrated from there that, although the flesh which was assumed from the woman is not mixed with the Word, nonetheless he exists as one out of two, and his nature is one, as he who is the Word was incarnate".[58] This is a position from which Severus never budged.

A more formidable opponent on the Eutychian front than Sergius was Bishop Julian of Halicarnassus. Julian was so convinced of the oneness of Christ that even to admit that Christ's body was corruptible before the Resurrection smacked of dualism. The single subject of Christ's earthly life was the Word, with the result that the flesh assumed by him was taken up totally into the divine life and rendered incapable of corruption. Julian had once been a friend and ally of Severus but Severus' arguments for a difference (though not a duality) between the divine and the human elements in Christ came to strike him as outright Nestorianism.[59] As Grillmeier remarks, nothing could have infuriated Severus more than such a charge.[60] He leaped to defend himself with a refutation of Julian. In the course of ridiculing what he describes as Julian's idea of a "non-different difference", he gives a detailed exposition of his understanding of the *mia-physis* formula. In Christ the divinity (the Word) and the humanity (the "soul-enfleshed flesh") remain what they are without alteration but they combine in a natural union. "For the one nature and *hypostasis* of God the Word which is without alteration was incarnate, which does not accept division into God the Word and man, but displays God and man the same without division, that is to say, God who is incarnate".[61] The Word, who is the *mia physis*, is the single subject of Christ's salvific work. In this Severus agrees with Julian. But the Word made the flesh his own, neither abrogating its consubstantiality with our own humanity (as Julian sought to do), nor turning it into a separate subject (as Chalcedon seemed to imply). Nor is the unity "from two natures" a static entity. The Word brings about our salvation in his incarnate self, not using his body as an external instrument but constantly willing and acting as a single *hypostasis* with a single *energeia*, or activity.

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[57] Severus of Antioch, *Philalethes*, ch. 1, CSCO 68, 161; trans. Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 67.

[58] Severus of Antioch, *Philalethes*, florilegium ch. 12, CSCO 68, 222; trans. Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 74.

[59] Severus of Antioch, *Adversus apologiam Juliani* ch. 19, CSCO 301, 279; trans. Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 102.

[60] Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 93.

[61] Severus of Antioch, *Adversus apologiam Juliani* ch. 19, CSCO 301, 282; trans. Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 104.

Severus died in 538. By then the tide had turned against the anti-Chalcedonians. In 482 the Emperor Zeno had tried to accommodate both pro- and anti-Chalcedonian sentiment in the empire by imposing the *Henotikon*, an edict which downplayed Chalcedon as doctrinally normative by ignoring the *Tome* of Leo and accepting Cyril's Twelve Chapters (his Third Letter to Nestorius) as authoritative. Although the latitude allowed by the *Henotikon* facilitated debate, it failed in its purpose of uniting the empire. It was the next Emperor, Anastasius, who in pursuit of a policy in line with *Henotikon* had appointed Severus Patriarch of Antioch, but the acrimonious divisions continued. When Anastasius died in 518, Severus was deposed. The new regime, under Justin and more emphatically under his nephew Justinian, abandoned the *Henotikon* and sought to re-impose a Chalcedonian line.[62] This renewed attempt to unite the empire under the Definition of Chalcedon has been called "neo-Chalcedonian" because it took the weaknesses of the Definition into account and sought to remedy them.

The term "neo-Chalcedonian" was popularised in the mid-twentieth century by Charles Moeller to distinguish the Christological developments that took place under Justinian from the so-called "strict Chalcedonianism" of the previous century.[63] Moeller was rather hostile to these developments, which he describes as "a polemical reaction, a kind of *ad hominem* argument, used by the controversialists in their engagement with the monophysites in the regions where the latter were dominant".[64] Some modern scholars still take Moeller's line. Others are more inclined to see Chalcedon as Cyrillian from the beginning.[65] Richard Price, for example, sees "the unambiguously Cyrillian Christology of neo-Chalcedonianism as a valid clarification of Chalcedon, involving a certain shift of emphasis but no change of meaning".[66] I believe he is right. The developments that took place under Justinian—the acceptance of theopaschite language (emphasizing that it was the Word of God who was the subject of the suffering on the cross), the condemnation of the "Three Chapters" (anathematizing the works and person of Theodore of Mopsuestia, certain writings of Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and a letter attributed to Ibas of Edessa, all of which appeared supportive of Nestorianism but had been accepted by Chalcedon), and the edicts against Origenism and *On the Orthodox Faith*—all these were intended to uphold Chalcedon by removing its ambiguities. At the beginning of his reign Justinian

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[62] For a lucid survey of Justinian's ecclesiastical policy see Richard Price, *The Acts of the Council of Constantinople of 553* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), vol. 1, 8–41.

[63] Moeller, "Le chalcédonisme." The term "neo-Chalcedonian" was first mentioned by Lebon in 1909. For a history of its use see Van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria*, 30-9.

[64] Moeller, "Le chalcédonisme," 667.

[65] This approach begins with André de Halleux, "La définition christologique à Chalcédoine," *Revue théologique de Louvain* 7 (1976): 3–23, 155–70, and is followed by Patrick T. R. Gray, *The Defence of Chalcedon in the East (451–553)* (Leiden: Brill), 169-72 and Price, *The Acts of Constantinople 553*, vol. 1, 73–5. In 1951 Grillmeier accepted Moeller's view but by the time he completed his monumental studies on Christology he came to see much more continuity between Chalcedon and Constantinople II (Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 461-2).

[66] Price, *The Acts of Constantinople 553*, vol. 1, 74.

seems to have been convinced that communion with the miaphysites could be restored if it was demonstrated to them that what they considered important was already implicit in Chalcedon. The clarification of the *mia-physis* formula was one facet of this policy.

An important event in this context occurred early in Justinian's reign, a conference that the Emperor arranged in Constantinople in 532 between a small number of representatives from both the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian sides.[67] His intention seems to have been to discover what was needed to make Chalcedon acceptable to the followers of the ex-Patriarch Severus—Severus himself was not invited to participate. The conference is remarkable for the high quality of its Christological debate. A topic which came up for discussion on the second day was the authenticity of the supposedly patristic texts that had popularised the *mia-physis* formula. The leader of the Chalcedonian side, Hypatius of Ephesus, had come well prepared with a dossier proving that these were Apollinarian forgeries.[68] The miaphysites, who had been complaining of novelties introduced by Chalcedon, seem to have been put on a spot, for they omit any mention of the Apollinarian forgery (and hence novelty) in their own account of the conference. But a formidable weapon had been placed in the hands of the Chacedonians.

Nevertheless, at the end of the conference Justinian offered the miaphysites generous terms. They could keep the *mia-physis* formula provided they did not anathematize Chalcedon's two-natures formula. But for them nothing short of the setting aside of Chalcedon would do. The acceptance of Leo's *Tome* as canonical, the exclusion of the phrase "from two natures" from the Definition, and the condemnation of Dioscorus all made the Council of Chalcedon in their view irremediable. Justinian, however, may not have given up all hope of reconciling them. One member of the Syrian delegation, Philoxenus of Doliche, changed sides. Four years later (in 536) Severus was formally condemned by the Home Synod of Constantinople (on bogus charges of Eutychianism and Manichaeism) to drive a further wedge between him and his followers. But the miaphysites in general held firm.

*Leontius of Jerusalem*

The offer made to the miaphysite representatives at the conference of 532 was in line with the consensus that had been developing among Chalcedonian theologians on the complementarity of miaphysite and dyophysite expressions. A work by Leontius of Jerusalem composed shortly after the conference discusses the patristic evidence for this complementarity with impressive erudition. This is

[67] There is a detailed account in Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 232-51. Records from both sides survive, with a new Syriac source having been discovered by Sebastian Brock in 1981. There was no suggestion on the imperial side that Chalcedon was susceptible of reform. Grillmeier describes the meeting as "a doctrinal dialogue on the theological level, with the aim of clarifying the Severan uncertainties and of restoring ecclesial unity" (Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 234).

[68] See Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 238, fn. 44 for a history of earlier doubts. The dossier may have been supplied by Leontius of Byzantium.

his *Testimonies of the Saints*, which has been transmitted along with another work of his called the *Aporiae*.[69] The first work opens with a discussion of the *mia-physis* formula. The Severans, says Leontius, pride themselves on the patristic origin of "one incarnate nature of God the Word" and demand to know which of the Fathers use the expression "two natures, albeit undivided, of Christ". Severus himself, Leontius correctly observes, "protests that most of the Fathers use the expression 'two natures' in a blameless way".[70] In fact the two *formulae* have precisely the same meaning and express an identical reality. In that case, the Severans would counter, why introduce a second formula? The *mia-physis* formula should be sufficient on its own. In response to this objection Leontius gives a brief account of the principles of doctrinal development.[71] It is impossible to refrain for ever from new expressions. The phrase, "one incarnate nature of God the Word" itself is an explication of John the Theologian's "the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). "Fresh teachings are enunciated by means of a quite new combination of words even where, as often happens, we recognize intellectually that the express usages of Holy Scripture themselves are true as well". [72] The Council of Nicaea's introduction of the term *homoousios* ("consubstantial") provides a parallel case. If the phrase "one incarnate nature of God the Word" was needed as a gloss on John 1:14, this was to counter Nestorian teaching on the relational union of the natures and make it clear that the one Christ's two natures were united in a single *hypostasis*. Likewise, the two-natures formula was devised to counter those (i.e. the followers of Eutyches) who "declare that the Incarnation of the Word took place through change or commingling (*synchysis*)".[73] As a matter of fact the *mia-physis* formula, Leontius argues, like John the Grammarian before him, also implies duality "by introducing something incarnated and something that incarnates".[74] But the lack of precision in terminology ("to thoughtless people 'nature' is a word with more than one meaning, and is often used in place of 'substance' and '*hypostasis*'"[75]) necessitates a further statement to make it clear that "the one Christ's two natures are united in his one *hypostasis*".[76]

Leontius adduces a large number of authorities—with an emphasis on Cyril but also quoting moderns such as John the Grammarian and Severus—to support his contention that both the "one-nature" and the "two-nature" formulae are necessary, the first to counter Nestorianism and the second Eutychianism.

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[69] Edited and translated by Patrick T. R. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem. Against the Monophysites: Testimonies of the Saints and Aporiae* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 40. These two works are also known (misleadingly) by the compendious title *Against the Monophysites*.

[70] Leontius of Jerusalem, *Testimonies of the Saints*, PG 86, 1804D; Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 47.

[71] I mean 'development' in the patristic sense of the explication (*ἀνάπτυξις*) of what was always implicit.

[72] Leontius of Jerusalem, *Testimonies of the Saints*, PG 86, 1808A; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 48-9.

[73] Ibid., 1809A; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 50-1.

[74] Ibid., 1809A; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 52-3.

[75] Ibid., 1808D; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 50-1.

[76] Ibid., 1809A; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 52-3.

This is why despite being aware of the Apollinarian origin of the *mia-physis* formula he is unwilling to rule it out of court: "If our teacher Cyril introduces it as being Athanasius' statement, then, it's not impossible that he was drawn to it either as invested with our meaning, or—under the influence of certain people's forgery—mistaken for patristic rather than heretical evidence".[77] The *mia-physis* formula has the meaning that Cyril gave to it.

Transmitted along with the *Testimonies of the Saints* is a separate work by consisting of sixty-three *aporiae*, (or "difficulties") in which Leontius goes over the same ground but this time taking a dialectical approach. Five of the *aporiae* pose questions specifically about the logical implications of the *mia-physis* formula that are designed to put the miaphysites in a quandary.[78] The first question (*aporia* 37) is whether there is a difference between the "one incarnate nature of God the Word" and the one non-incarnate nature of God the Father. A positive answer would deny the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father; a negative answer would entail that the Father's one nature is also incarnate. The second question (*aporia* 42) takes up the version of the formula, "one nature of God the Word incarnate", with "incarnate" in the masculine attached to "God the Word". Used without the original version, the teaching of the Fathers is distorted. Used with it, a duality is entailed. The remaining questions press home the logical inconsistencies of speaking of one nature without any division. Is Christ's humanity merely a quality or is it itself a nature? Does the one nature out of two belong to the Word or to Christ alone? The conclusion to be drawn is that even on logical grounds the *mia-physis* formula cannot be used to justify the repudiation of Chalcedon's teaching on the two natures.

*Justinian's Theological Initiatives*

The Emperor Justinian himself was no amateur when it came to theological disputation. About ten years after the conference in Constantinople with the Severans he wrote a dogmatic tractate in the form of a letter addressed to the monks of the Enaton monastery outside Alexandria, known later as *Against the Monophysites*. In this he gives an exegesis of Cyril's use of the *mia-physis* formula, which he says the "enemies of the truth" interpret out of context and, moreover, misuse Cyril's body-soul analogy.[79] Drawing on the now standard dyophysite interpretation of the formula, he insists one has to look at the full context of what Cyril was saying: "the holy Father did not say one nature composed of flesh and divinity as they imagine; for having said the nature of the Word is one when contemplated without the flesh, he did not stop there, but he added the term 'incarnate', to show us by this word the other, human nature".[80] Justinian

[77] Ibid., 1865A; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 122-3.

[78] *Aporiae* nos. 37, 42, 43, 59 and 60; ed. and trans. Gray, *Leontius of Jerusalem*, 200-1, 206-7, 218-19 and 220-1.

[79] Justinan, *Against the Monophysites*, PG 86, 1112C-1117A; trans. Kenneth P. Wesche, *On the Person of Christ*: *The Christology of Emperor Justinian* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 35-9.

[80] Ibid., 1113A; trans. Wesche, *On the Person of Christ*, 36.

is fully aware the *mia-physis* formula was derived from an Apollinarian forgery,[81] but its use by Cyril sanitizes it, provided it is taken as Cyril intended.

These arguments are summed up authoritatively in Justinian's edict of 551 *On the Orthodox Faith*. The *mia-physis* formula is acceptable if interpreted as Cyril intended, which means that the word "nature" in the phrase "one incarnate nature" must be taken to mean "*hypostasis*" or "person".[82] This is clear from Cyril's Second Letter to Succensus, where the "incarnate nature" means the divine nature *with* the flesh, the two not being "mingled" or amalgamated but subsisting as two natures. In Justinian's view the soul-body analogy, although standard since Cyril's time, is of limited value and has to be used cautiously. All human beings are composed of body and soul but they do not differ in nature from each other, whereas Christ's nature "is not predicated in common with many hypostases or persons".[83] Nor was Christ's divinity (corresponding to the soul in the analogy) brought into being in time as each human soul is. Christ is a single *hypostasis* acknowledged in two natures, uncreated and created. He cannot be one nature in the same sense that his divinity and his humanity are natures, because then he would not be consubstantial both with the Father and with us. Nature and *hypostasis* must be distinguished from each other, and only the *hypostasis* may properly be called "one".

Justinian summed up his position on the "one incarnate nature of God the Word" in the ninth of the anathemas that he appends to his edict. This anathema was reproduced two years later in substantially the same wording (with that other anti-Chalcedonian slogan, *ek dyo physeon*, "from two natures", conjoined with the *mia-physis* formula) as Canon 8 of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553). The canon begins as follows:

> If anyone professing that the union took place from the two natures of Godhead and manhood or saying "one incarnate nature of God the Word" does not so take it, as the holy Fathers taught, to mean that from the divine and the human natures, after the hypostatic union, one Christ was constituted, but attempts from these statements to introduce one nature or essence of the Godhead and flesh of Christ, let him be anathema.[84]

The Edict's Anathema 9 makes it clear who is targeted by the Council's canon. It is not Severans, or moderate miaphysites, but followers of Apollinarius and Eutyches. The interpretation of *mia physis* put forward by Justinan in the Edict of 551 and in Canon 8 of 553 was compatible with the teaching of Severus and did not contribute to the hardening of the schism between the imperial

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[81] Ibid., 1125A; trans. Wesche, *On the Person of Christ*, 53.

[82] Justinian, edict *On the Orthodox Faith*, ed. Eduard Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Justinians* (Munich, 1939), 78; trans. Price, *The Acts of Constantinople 553*, vol. 1, 134.

[83] Justinian, edict *On the Orthodox Faith*, ed. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatischen Schriften*, 80; trans. Price, *The Acts of Constantinople 553*, vol. 1, 136.

[84] *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* 4. 1, 217; trans. Price, *The Acts of Constantinople 553*, vol. 2, 122-3.

Church and the miaphysites.[85] That hardening was the result of other factors beyond the reach of theological dialogue.[86]

*Concluding Reflections*

The history of the *mia-physis* formula shows how an expression, even if known to have been of heretical origin, could be accepted by both parties in a dispute if it had the support of a great Church Father and was interpreted in his spirit. The discussions and disputations conducted between Chalcedonians and miaphysites in the early sixth century at least established that the phrase "one incarnate nature of God the Word" need not be an insuperable impediment to the restoration of communion. It is highly regrettable that the Severans had set their hearts on the annulment of the Council of Chalcedon altogether rather than simply on the clarification of its basically Cyrillian orientation. Justinian had a difficult course to steer. He needed to keep the papacy and the West on board, so there was no question of annulling Chalcedon. But he does not seem even after the Fifth Ecumenical Council to have abandoned all hope of reconciliation with the miaphysites.[87] Until the establishment of rival hierarchies later in the sixth century, this was a quarrel conducted within the Orthodox family.

[85] Severus was condemned by the Home Synod of Constantinople in 536 on bogus charges of Eutychianism and Manichaeism. For the details see Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon*, 23, note 33. His genuine teaching was never censured.

[86] For an illuminating analysis of these other factors see Volker L. Menze, *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). More important than high-level theological debate were such liturgical matters as which names were to be excluded from the diptychs as a prerequisite for the restoration of communion.

[87] In response to an enquiry from me, Richard Price has written: "A question to which I could find no certain answer is whether during the council of 553 Justinian was still hoping for a speedy accommodation with the miaphysites. The chronology of his negotiations with them around this time is unfortunately unclear. But one can at least say that he will not have wished the council of 553 to close any doors. Another frustration—after the mass of evidence for the period down to 553—is the lack of sources for Justinian's ecclesiastical policy during the rest of the reign—apart from his puzzling toying with aphthartodocetism at the very end (which Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2, part 2, 468-73 treats very judiciously)". (Aphthartodocetism is the heretical opinion that Christ's earthly body was not subject to corruption or the passions. Justinian seems to have given it some consideration in the course of negotiations with the party of Julian of Halicarnassus).

# Controversial aspects in the Christology of Dioscorus of Alexandria

*Ilias Kesmiris*

Dioscorus, Archbishop of Alexandria, is one of the most important personalities of the 5th century. His teaching and ecclesiastical policy marked an entire era. He is the spiritual leader of the non-Chalcedonian theological movement. He also established the theological pillars of non-Chalcedonian Christology. Sixteen centuries after his death his words and actions continue to impact us today.

Dioscorus, as archdeacon, followed Cyril of Alexandria in the Council of Ephesus (431).[1] After the death of Cyril (444) he succeeded him to the archiepiscopal throne of Alexandria. His election was greeted with enthusiasm even by Cyril's theological opponents. "The fame of your virtues, and particularly of your modesty and humility, was widely spread", declared Theodoret of Cyrus in a letter addressed to him after his consecration.[2] We don't know what Dioscorus had in mind when he read Theodoret's letter but surely Dioscorus disappointed him.

Dioscorus was an outspoken opponent of Nestorianism. The main point of his ecclesiastical policy was the destruction of anything reminiscent of Nestorianism and the prevalence of Cyril's Christology. The unfortunate event of the rehabilitation of archimandrite Eutyches and the deposing of the Archbishop of New Rome Flavian in the Synod of Ephesus (449) at his initiative, led him as indicated before, to the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), which deposed and exiled him.[3] He died (454) in exile.[4] Dioscorus has not left much auctorial work.

Dioscorus' strong persistence in the monophysite aspect of Cyril's Christology, combined with Eutyches' rehabilitation in the Synod of Ephesus (449) and the rejection of the dyophysite Definition of Chalcedon (451) gave his theological and ecclesiastical opponents the opportunity to blame him for reviving Docetism. This is the key question. The rehabilitation of Eutyches argues in favour of a positive answer to this question because it implies that there was an identity to their Christological beliefs. The answer would lead naturally to this conclusion if Dioscorus, in the shaping of non-Chalcedonian Christology, was consistent with Eutyches' Christology. But historical events, after Chalcedon, prove just the opposite. If Dioscorus was a follower of Eutyches' Christology, why did the non-Chalcedonian Church excommunicate the

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[1] Kahali Alemu, "Η Χριστολογία τῶν αἰθιοπικῶν ἀναφορῶν ἐν σχέσει πρὸς τὸ δόγμα τῆς Χαλκηδόνας" (PhD diss., University of Thessaloniki), ΕΕΘΣΑΠΘ [= *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Α.Π.Θ.*], 24/21 (1977), 92.

[2] *Epistle 60*, Διοσκόρῳ Ἀλεξανδρείας, PG [=*Patrologia Graeca*, *Cursus Completus*, ed. J. Migne, Paris 1857-1912], 83, 1232BC.

[3] ACO [=E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, Berolini et Lipsiae 1927-1940], II,1,2,41; Evagrius Scholasticus, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, PG 86b, 2509C.

[4] M. F. Nau, "Histoire de Dioscore, patriarche d'Alexandrie écrite par son disciple Théopiste," *Journal Asiatique* 10/I (1908): 307.

Eutychian theologians and priests? According to non-Chalcedonian theologians like Khella,[5] Samuel,[6] Antony,[7] and Alemu,[8] Dioscorus did not share the views of Eutyches and was opposed to the revival of Docetism.

Within Chalcedonian theological circles, there are two main trends of interpretation of Dioscorus' theological relations with Eutyches. On the one hand, many Chalcedonians expressed the view that the rehabilitation of Eutyches by Dioscorus does not imply identification with their Christological beliefs. In particular, we should mention that Anatolius, the Archbishop of New Rome, who was the first theologian to argue that Dioscorus was not convicted by the Council of Chalcedon as a heretic but was found guilty under canon law.[9] The Chalcedonian Fathers, in the 532 conference between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians at Constantinople, argued that Dioscorus did not accept Eutyches' Christology.[10] Modern Chalcedonian theologians like Metropolitan Methodios,[11] Metropolitan Georgios of Nevrokopi,[12] Papadopoulos,[13] Christou,[14] Romanides,[15] and Florovsky,[16] do not accept the view that the Christological ideas of Dioscorus and Eutyches are the same.

On the other hand, some Chalcedonian theologians connect Dioscorus' Christology with Eutyches' Christology. They expressed the view that there is theological dependence of Dioscorus' Christology on Eutychian Christology. The dependence was precisely demonstrated by the cancellation of the decisions of the Endemousa Synod (448), which condemned Eutyches, and by the Synod of Ephesus (449), which was chaired by Dioscorus. According to Eustathius the monk, [17] Leontius of Jerusalem, [18] Justinian, [19] Sophronius of Jerusalem, [20]

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[5] "Dioskoros I. Von Alexandrien. Theologie und Kirchenpolitik," *Les Coptes*, *The Copts*, *Die Kopten*, I.Teil, Bd 2 (Hamburg 1981), 9-282; II.Teil, Bd 3 (Hamburg 1983), 13-111.

[6] "The Manhood of Jesus Christ in the tradition of the Syrian Orthodox Church", GOTR [=The *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*], 13/2(1968): 156.

[7] "Ὁ Κύρος Ἀλεξανδρείας καὶ οἱ Κόπται κατὰ τὴν ἀραβικὴν κατάκτησιν τῆς Αἰγύπτου," *ΕΕΘΣΑΠΘ*, 3(1959):10-11.

[8] Alemu, "Ἡ Χριστολογία τῶν αἰθιοπικῶν ἀναφορῶν," 94-95.

[9] ACO II,1,2,124.

[10] See S. Brock, "The conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian (532)," *OrChrPer [=Orientalia Christiana Periodica]*, 47(1981): 96.

[11] *Τὸ πρόσωπο τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ στὶς ἀποφάσεις τῶν Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνόδων* (Athens 1997), 108-109.

[12] "Ἡ ἕνωσις τῆς Κοπτικῆς μετὰ τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας εὐχερὴς μελέτη ἱστορική, δογματική, κανονική," *Γρηγ. Παλ. [=Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς]* 35 (1952): 337; 233; 401-405.

[13] *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἀντιοχείας* (Alexandria, 1951), 456.

[14] *Πατρολογία*, t. IV (Thessaloniki 1989), 544-545.

[15] "Leo of Rome's support of Theodoret, Dioscorus of Alexandria's support of Eutyches and the lifting of the anathemas," *Θεολ. [= Θεολογία]*, 65 (1994): 479; 481.

[16] *The Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century*, in The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, Vol. 8 (Vaduz: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1987), 327

[17] *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Τιμόθεον Σχολαστικόν, περὶ δύο φύσεων κατὰ Σευήρου*, PG 86a, 933D.

[18] *Ἀπορίαι τοὺς μίαν φύσιν λέγοντας σύνθετον τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ μαρτυρίαι τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ἀνάλυσις τοῦ δόγματος αὐτῶν*, PG 86b, 1885B.

[19] E. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians*, AAM, N.F. 18 (Munchen, 1939), 24; (Milano 1973[2]), 40(24).

Zonaras,[21] Dioscorus' Christology depends on the Christology of Eutyches. The rehabilitation of Eutyches and the rejection of the dyophysite Definition of Faith of Chalcedon by Dioscorus is a strong argument. This view is shared by many contemporary theologians like Vafidis,[22] Protopresbyter Zisis,[23] Larchet,[24] and Tselegidis.[25]

Dioscorus of Alexandria is one the most controversial figures in Church history. Sometimes, his actions lacked consistency, especially in Eutyches' case. Surely, he did not have a profound theological education like his predecessors, Cyril and Athanasius, nor did he have Cyril's diplomacy. Dioscorus was first of all an Archbishop who wanted to implement a particular ecclesiastical policy. There were two main aims in Dioscorus' ecclesiastical policy. First, he wanted to affirm and enforce the fact that the apostolic throne of Alexandria is the first throne in the ranking relative to the thrones of Antioch and Constantinople reaching the point of excommunicating even the Pope of Rome. Second, Dioscorus pursued the elimination of all theological residues of Antiochene dyophysitism which continued to exist because of the active theological presence of Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa. Although Nestorius was condemned at the Third Ecumenical Council (431), the peace in the Church, which was achieved after the Reconciliation of 433 between Cyril and John of Antioch, did not last long. On the one hand, Antiochene theologians misinterpreted the Formula of Reunion (433), and on the other hand they brought back to the forefront the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodorus of Tarsus to counteract the strict prohibition of possession or the use of Nestorius' treatises.[26] Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodorus of Tarsus had been viewed as supreme theological authorities in the East,[27] and Ibas of Edessa translated the treatises of Theodore of Mopsuestia into Syriac.[28]

In November 448, Eusebius of Dorylaeum interrupted a meeting of Constantinople's Home Synod (Endemousa) to present a bill of indictment formally accusing the aged archimandrite Eutyches of the heresy of Docetism. Eutyches, having been informed about the accusations, initially refused to confess the double consubstantiality of Christ, as it was formulated in the Formula of Reunion (433). He argued that consubstantial with us is not Christ

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[20] *Συνοδικὴ Ἐπιστολή*, PG 87c, 3185B; 3192A.

[21] *Θησαυρὸς Ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως*, PG 134,1192A.

[22] *Ἐπίτομος ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μέχρις ἁλώσεως τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως (1-1453 μ.Χ.), v.1* (Constantinople 1884), 240.

[23] "Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς καὶ ἡ 'Ὀρθοδοξία' τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων," *Γρηγ. Παλ.* 744 (1992): 1141.

[24] *Personne et nature. La Trinité – Le Christ – L'homme: Contributions aux dialogues interorthodoxe et interchrétien contemporain* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011), 134ff; idem, "Τὸ Χριστολογικὸ Πρόβλημα (περὶ τῆς μελετωμένης Ἑνώσεως τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῶν μή-Χαλκηδονίων Ἐκκλησιῶν: Ἐκκρεμοῦντα Θεολογικὰ καὶ Ἐκκλησιολογικὰ Προβλήματα) (Γ')," *Θεολ.* 75/1 (2004): 79-84.

[25] "*Ἐπιστημονικὴ κριτικὴ μίας διδακτορικῆς διατριβῆς*," *Γρηγ. Παλ.* 85,792(2002): 308-316.

[26] Vl. Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία, t. I* (Athens 1994), 622.

[27] Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle 69, Πρὸς Ἀκάκιον Μελιτηνῆς*, PG 77, 340BC.

[28] Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 623.

but his mother Mary: "Till today I have not said that the body of our Lord and God is consubstantial with us, but I acknowledge that the Holy Virgin is consubstantial with us, and that our God was enfleshed from her". At this point, Basil of Seleucia intervened and with a reasonable observation forced him to finally accept the consubstantiality of Jesus Christ with us. He argued, "If His mother is consubstantial with us, so is He; for He was called son of man. If then His mother is consubstantial with us, then He too is consubstantial with us in respect of the flesh".[29] Indeed, Eutyches confessed that the body of Christ is not a common man's body but the body of the Son of God maintaining that Christ's body is human and that He received it from the Virgin Mary who is consubstantial with us. Eutyches justified his previous refusal of the consubstantiality of Christ with the rest of the human race saying that the reason was the fear lest he consider the Christ as an ordinary man. The Archimandrite finally confessed the consubstantiality of Christ with us.[30] According to Professor Martzelos, both Nestorius and Theodore of Mopsuestia believed that sin constitutes an ontological component of the fallen human nature after the original sin. Therefore, since they considered Jesus "consubstantial to us" in his human nature, they were somehow obliged to accept that he took over the inherent sin. This moral and metaphysical condition was accepted by Eutyches and so he refused to admit that the body of Christ is "consubstantial to us" out of fear of being considered as sinful and profane.[31]

But the Endemousa Synod was not satisfied with his confession and linked the acceptance of the consubstantiality of Jesus with us with the confession of the existence of two natures. "Do you affirm 'two natures' and 'consubstantial with us'? Speak!" asked Patrikios Florentios intensely. "I have read in the blessed Cyril, in the holy Fathers and in Saint Athanasius that they said 'from two natures' before the union, but after the union and the incarnation they no longer affirmed two natures but one", Eutyches answered.[32] Eutyches did not deny the consubstantiality of Christ with us but refused to confess the dyophysite formula "from two natures after the incarnation",[33] which is equivalent to the dyophysite formula "in two natures". Unfortunately for Eutyches, according to the view of the Fathers of Endemousa, the non-acceptance of the dyophysite formula leads to confusion of Christ's natures. This is why the Endemousa deposed him from the priesthood and anathematized him, prohibiting anyone else from having communion with him.[34]

Eutyches did not go quietly. Amid the chaos that apparently ensued after the reading of the verdict, he made an appeal to the Bishops of Rome,

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[29] ACO II,1,1,142. See the English translation of the minutes of Chalcedon: 'Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, v.1. Session 1, translated with introduction and notes by R.Price and M.Gaddis', in *Translated Texts for Historians, Volume 45* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 221.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Georgios Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας καὶ ἡ οἰκουμενικὴ σημασία της* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras, 1990), 170-172 (in Greek).

[32] ACO II,1,1,144; Acts, *op. cit.*, 224

[33] ACO II,1,1,143-144.

[34] ACO II,1,1,145.

Alexandria, Jerusalem and Thessaloniki. His appeal did not go unheard and his issue was discussed in the Synod of Ephesus (449) which was convoked by the Emperor Theodosius II and chaired and dominated by Dioscorus of Alexandria. In the Synod, Eutyches argued that the decision of the Endemousa was unfair. He purported that he had never accepted the heretical opinions of which he was accused by his enemies who had slandered him by distorting his words and falsifying the minutes of the Endemousa.[35] First, Eutyches confessed faith in the Creed of Nicaea (325) and he blamed Flavian of Constantinople for demanding a personal profession of faith beyond the definitions of faith of Nicaea: "He required me to make certain statements that went beyond the definitions at Nicaea and at the previous council at Ephesus. Out of fear of transgressing the decree of the holy Council formerly convened here by the will of God and the definition of faith of the holy Fathers who met at Nicaea, I demanded that my case be referred to your holy Council, since I am ready to abide by your judgement; but while I was speaking, they suddenly read out the condemnation against me which had been composed long before in accordance with his wishes".[36] According to Professor Martzelos, a key element of the ecclesiastical policy of Dioscorus was that the criterion of Orthodoxy is the acceptance of the Creed of Nicaea and the 7th canon of Ephesus (431), which prohibits confessing or drafting another faith other than that of Nicaea.[37] According to this criterion, Dioscorus acquitted Eutyches, just because he confessed faith in the Creed of Nicaea and accepted the 7th canon of Ephesus.[38] In accordance with this criterion, Flavian and Eusebius were found guilty of innovation and they were deposed in Ephesus (449).[39] Secondly, Eutyches condemned Docetism: "I anathematize Mani, Valentinus, Apollinarius and Nestorius, and all the heretics since Simon Magus, including those who say that the flesh of our Lord and God Jesus Christ came down from heaven".[40] Based on this confession, Eutyches was restored to the priesthood. Dioscorus and all participants consented to the decision of the rehabilitation of Eutyches.[41]

Eutyches' rehabilitation is an event of great embarrassment for non-Chalcedonians who maintain that Dioscorus was deceived by Eutyches, who hid his heretical views behind an Orthodox confession of faith. They point out that it is not the first time in Church history that an Orthodox bishop has been deceived by heretics. Vitalius of Antioch, follower of Apolinarius, by the use of equivocal theological terms convinced Pope Damasus of his Orthodoxy. Liberius of Rome received in communion Macedonian bishops and Marcellus of Ancyra, who had been deposed and banished on a charge of heresy by a synod at Constantinople in 336, was declared Orthodox on the strength of his confession

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[35] ACO II,1,1,181.

[36] ACO II,1,1,94ff; Acts, *op. cit.*, 162-163.

[37] Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας*, 185.

[38] ACO II,1,1,91.

[39] ACO II,1,1,192.

[40] ACO II,1,1,92; Acts, *op. cit.*, 158

[41] ACO II,1,1,182.

of faith which satisfied an Orthodox council in Rome.[42] These heretics, even though being received in communion by Orthodox Fathers, insisted on heretical views. The Orthodox bishops, who rehabilitated them, were victims of their fraud and of falsehood. "For neither against the holy Fathers did this bring of reproach, because many heretics consented to a temporary hypocrisy, and again returned to their impiety", wrote Severus of Antioch in defense of Dioscorus. According to non-Chalcedonians, Dioscorus was not a heretic but a victim of the fraud of one heretic, Eutyches.[43]

We believe there were root causes that led Dioscorus to make this decision and we should not be surprised. In 448, archimandrite Eutyches was not a famous heretic but a prominent spiritual leader. Eutyches was a vehement enemy of Nestorius and in a close and friendly relationship with Cyril of Alexandria. Cyril greatly appreciated Eutyches, counting on his help to achieve his theological purposes.[44] Cyril harboured great respect for Eutyches illustrated by the fact that Cyril himself sent him a copy of the Acts of the Council of Ephesus (431).[45] Eutyches was as one with the archbishops of Alexandria.[46] Dioscorus and Eutyches were warriors together against the revival of Nestorianism. After the Reconciliation of 433, Dioscorus and Eutyches were not satisfied with the disgrace of Nestorius, whom they saw as only an offshoot of far more deeply buried heretical roots. Consequently, they pursued the official condemnation of the treatises of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodorus of Tarsus, and the official acceptance by the Antiochenes of the Third Letter of Cyril to Nestorius with the Twelve Chapters.[47]

Dioscorus and Eutyches belonged to the same theological camp. Into the prevailing atmosphere of the era, the rehabilitation of Eutyches by Dioscorus was an expected action on the part of the Archbishop of Alexandria, because Eutyches was typically an ardent supporter of the Alexandrian Christology. The events of Endemousa (448) and the Synod of Ephesus (449) were the culmination of the Christological controversy between Alexandria and Antioch. In these Synods, the theological leaders of the two theological schools were sentenced. Endemousa condemned Eutyches, who seemingly was a follower of Cyrillian Christology; on the contrary, the Synod of Ephesus (449) condemned the major figures of the Antiochene school like Ibas of Edessa and Theodoret of Cyrus,[48] who were against Cyrillian Christology. The events of Endemousa and Synod of Ephesus (449) were nothing but another episode of this ongoing theological controversy.

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[42] J. Lebon, "Textes inédits de Philoxène de Mabboug," *Le Muséon* 43 (1930): 83-84.

[43] Severus of Antioch, *Letter to Neon*, PO[=*Patrologia Orientalis*, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau, Paris 1907], 12, 2, 268.

[44] Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 630.

[45] ACO II,1,1,91.

[46] See W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 30-31.

[47] See L. Abramowski, "Der Streit um Diodor und Theodor zwischen den beiden ephesinischen Konzilien," *ZKG* [=*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*] 67 (1955/56): 252ff.

[48] Evagrius Scholasticus, *op. cit.*, PG 86b, 2448A-2449A; Theophanes, *Χρονογραφία*, PG 108, 261BC; Niketas Choniates, *Θησαυρὸς Ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως*, PG 140, 41AB.

Dioscorus was not the only one who held Eutyches in high esteem. Pope Leo appreciated Eutyches because of his fight against Nestorian heresy. Eutyches had sent Leo a letter at the beginning of 448 pointing out the efforts of Antiochene theologians to revive Nestorianism.[49] In his letter of reply, Leo congratulates him for his zeal for the Catholic faith and his struggles against Nestorianism, acknowledging that Eutyches was in the Orthodox camp.[50] For this reason Leo immediately refused to accept the decision of the Archimandrite's condemnation. He wanted to know exactly, as stated in his letter to Flavian, the causes of this.[51] Eventually, Leo accepted the decision of Endemousa, completely changing his attitude towards Eutyches.

Apart from the above conclusions relating to the commitment of Eutyches on the side of the Alexandrian theologians, Endemousa blamed Dioscorus for reviving Docetism. The question therefore arose: if Dioscorus argued that he adhered to the teachings of Athanasius and Cyril,[52] what was the reason that he took no account of the above accusations of Endemousa? There are two main causes of Dioscorus' attitude. First, the accusations came from the rival theological camp and Eutyches accused his opponents of falsifing the minutes of Endemousa, supporting the fact that he was accused of heretical opinions which were never accepted by him.[53] So, according to Dioscorus, the charges against Eutyches were a conspiracy against a Cyrillian theologian. Second, it is not the first time that Antiochene theologians accuse the Alexandrian theologians of denying the consubstantiality of Christ with us. Nestorius had blamed Cyril for introducing confusion between humanity and divinity in the person of Christ.[54] Cyril's theological opponents featured his Christology as docetic because Cyril used the Christological Formula "one incarnate nature of God the Word". The existence of a single nature in Christ, according to Antiochenes, negates the consubstantiality of Christ with us and introduces confusion between divinity and humanity.[55] Therefore, according to Dioscorus, the accusations against Eutyches were a restatement of the accusations against Cyril by Antiochenes.

There were not only theological reasons that determined Dioscorus' behaviour. Many scholars like Harnack,[56] Frend,[57] Goubert,[58] argue that all the

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[49] G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'Eglise ancienne* (Études de Théologie Historique publiées sous la direction des professeurs de théologie à l'Institut catholique de Paris) (Paris: Beauchesne, 1948), 215; R. Draguet, "La Christologie d'Eutychès d'après les actes du synode de Flavien (448)," *Byzantion* 6 (1931): 455, fn.1.

[50] *Epistola XX. Ad Eutychem Constantinopolitanum abbatem*, PL [=*Patrologia Latina, Cursus Completus*, ed. J. Migne, Paris 1844-1890], 54, 714AB.

[51] See PL 54, 732B-734A.

[52] ACO II,1,1,188.

[53] ACO II,1,1,181. See also Evagrius Scholasticus, *op. cit.*, PG 86b, 2445A.

[54] See F. Loofs, *Nestoriana. Die Fragmente des Nestorius* (Halle a. S.: M. Niemeyer, 1905), 273; A. Grillmeier *Christ in Christian Tradition from the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451)*, tr. *J. S. Bowden* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), 452.

[55] Cyril of Alexandria, *Πρὸς τοὺς τολμῶντας συνηγορεῖν τοῖς Νεστορίου δόγμασιν, ὡς ὀρθῶς ἔχουσι*, PG 76,400BC.

[56] *History of Dogma*, t. IV, translated from the third German edition by Neil Buchanan (New York 1961), 190.

archbishops of Alexandria, from Athanasios to Dioscorus, served a common purpose: to become '*leaders of the Church of the East*', as Harnack suggests.[59] This was the second aim of Dioscorus' ecclesiastical policy. The author of Nestorian chronic *Barhadbessaba 'Arbaïa* refers to the fact that the throne of Alexandria always sought to intervene in the internal affairs of the Church of Constantinople trying to subjugate the Church of New Rome.[60] The period between 381 and 431 was turbulent. Alexandria was to overturn the canonical decisions of the Council of Constantinople (381). Peter of Alexandria disregarded Gregory the Theologian,[61] Theophilus of Alexandria violently deposed John Chrysostom[62] and Cyril deposed Nestorius who claimed to be a victim of the Alexandrian archbishop's desire for power and domination in the Christian world. [63]

Nestorius says that Eutyches, although he was not a bishop, and because of imperial favour towards him, became "bishop of bishops".[64] Essentially, it was he who ran all religious affairs and commanded the Church. But how did Eutyches find this political support? Eutyches was the spiritual leader of Chrysafios, a powerful man in the imperial court,[65] who prompted Dioscorus to take the initiative for the rehabilitation of Eutyches.[66] In this way, Dioscorus had a wonderful opportunity to obey the wishes of the imperial court and to succeed in making the throne of Alexandria almighty. Indeed, the rehabilitation of Eutyches overturned the decisions of the Home synod of Constantinople and the canonical right of the judgment of clergy assigned to the Archbishop of Alexandria. In the Synod of Ephesus (449) the chairman was not the Archbishop of Constantinople, but the Archbishop of Alexandria. Instead, the Archbishop of Constantinople was arbitrarily relegated to the fifth place[67] and then was deposed.[68] This involvement of the throne of Alexandria in the internal affairs of New Rome was not characterized as a regular right of the Archbishop of Alexandria, but as irregular ecclesiastical activity beyond the borders of his diocese.[69]

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[57] *Op. cit.*, 27ff.

[58] "Le rôle de Sainte Pulchérie et de l'eunuque Chrysaphios," in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bb. I, Der Glaube von Chalkedon, ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht (Würzburg 1951), 309.

[59] *Op. cit.*, 190.

[60] See PO 9, 5, 558-559.

[61] Stylianos Papadopoulos, *Γρηγόριος ὁ Θεολόγος. Σπουδὴ τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ ἔργου του* (Athens: Armos Publ. 1991), 119; 121; 126 (in Greek).

[62] Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 549-550.

[63] George Bebis, "Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν περὶ τοῦ Νεστορίου ἔρευναν (ἐξ ἐπόψεως ὀρθοδόξου)" (PhD diss., University of Athens 1964), 165-166.

[64] *Le livre d'Héraclide de Damas*, traduit en français par F. Nau avec le concours du R. P. Bedjan et de M. Brière (Paris 1910), 294.

[65] Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 632.

[66] Nikephoros Kallistos, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, PG 146, 1221CD-1225A. See also A. Jones, *The later Roman Empire, 284-602: a social, economic and administrative survey*, v. I (Blackwell 1986), 568.

[67] See Niketas Choniates, *op. cit.*, PG 140, 40D.

[68] ACO II,1,1,191.

[69] ACO II,1,1,65-66.

In conclusion, Dioscorus believed that Eutyches was a valuable ally to achieve the above ecclesiastico-political aims and to win the favour of the imperial court. At the same time he believed that the condemnation of Eutyches, who was an opponent of Nestorianism, was a methodical and well planned effort of the Antiochene theologians to revive Nestorianism. Although Endemousa condemned Eutyches as a reviver of docetic Christology, Dioscorus was not disposed to accept its decisions as they were aligned absolutely with the opinion of the Antiochenes around the face and theology of Eutyches. Dioscorus' attitude towards the person of Eutyches changed in the Fourth Ecumenical Council because Dioscorus realized he was a victim of fraud on the part of Eytuches. "If Eutyches holds opinions contrary to the doctrines of the Church, he deserves not only punishment but to be burnt. For my concern is for the catholic and apostolic faith and not for any human being. My mind is fixed on the Godhead, and I do not look to any person nor care about anything except my soul and the true and pure faith", declared Dioscorus in the Council of Chalcedon.[70]

The Synod of Ephesus (449) looked at first like a decisive victory for Dioscorus, but the almightiness of Dioscorus did not last long, as after the death of Emperor Theodosius (450) and the marriage of his sister Pulcheria with Marcian, the political landscape changed completely.[71] The Pope of Rome was unhappy with the events of the synod of 449, which he described as being a "non iudicium sed latrocinium"[72] synod. He wanted the restoration of the canonical order. Marcian was determined to reverse the ecclesiastical situation created by the actions of Dioscorus and to revise the decisions of Ephesus (449). This change of the imperial ecclesiastical policy was directed against Dioscorus.[73]

Marcian convoked the Council of Chalcedon (451) in order to restore the canonical order. The Council declared its full commitment to Cyril's Christology denouncing the heresy of Eutyches and those who were like-minded. The Council expressed agreement between Flavian's dyophysite confession in Endemousa (448) and Cyril's Christology. The participants of the Council welcomed the synodical decision but Dioscorus had a different opinion. According to Dioscorus, Flavian was deposed because he argued that there are two natures in the Person of Jesus Christ after the union of Divinity and humanity. This belief leads to the dividing of the one Christ into two persons. For this reason, according to Dioscorus, Flavian's Christology was against the patristic tradition of the Church.[74] Conversely, Flavian's supporters argued that the decisions of the Endemousa and the dyophysite confession of Flavian are in full agreement with the faith of the Council of Nicaea (325) and Ephesus (431). Julian of Cos stressed that these two Councils are teaching that we must confess "two natures in one person".[75]

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[70] ACO II,1,1,92; Acts, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[71] Theophanes, *op. cit.*, PG 108, 265C-268A; Nikephoros Kallistos, *op. cit.*, PG 147, 13B.

[72] *Epistola XCV*, *Ad Pulcheriam Augustam*, PL 54, 943.

[73] See Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας*, 140-141.

[74] ACO II,1,1,117.

[75] ACO II,1,1,121.

The Council of Chalcedon was the place and the way in which opposing theological camps met and expressed their interpretive disagreements about the Formula of Reunion (433), which contained the phrase "two natures".[76] Cyril had accepted the Formula of Reunion, although he was well aware that the Formula of Reunion was far from being a full victory for the Alexandrian school, but he did this to achieve Church unity that had been injured in Ephesus (431). John of Antioch did the same. Since many extreme Alexandrians opposed this action, Cyril sent letters setting out the reasons that led to this action, claiming that this was not a retreat toward Nestorianism.[77] Cyril assured his followers that the Reconciliation was not a regress from the theology expressed in Ephesus (431)[78] and that Antiochenes retreated from the extreme dyophysite positions.[79] Nevertheless, Theodoret of Cyrus had argued that the meaning of the Formula of Reunion was diametrically opposite to the content of the Third Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius![80] Even after the Reconciliation, Theodoret refused to recognize the heretical character of Nestorius' Christology.[81] Professor Vl. Phidas argues that Antiochenes used the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia to interpret in the Nestorian manner the Formula of Reunion.[82]

The Council of Chalcedon was to uncover the above interpretive disagreement. This disagreement noted by Eustathius of Beirut who declared that Cyril interpreted his Christology in the letters he wrote to the bishops like Acacius of Melitene, Valerian of Iconium and Succensus of Diocaesarea, because many theologians had misinterpreted his writings. According to Eustathius, Cyril emphasized that accepting the dyophysite phrase in the text of the Formula of Reunion does not imply removal from the theology of the phrase *"one incarnate nature of God the Word"*. Without rejecting the existence of human nature, Cyril maintains that we should not conceive of two natures but of one incarnate nature of the Word. But Eustathius' speech was a "declaration of war" for Antiochenes who reacted strongly and accused him of Eutychianism. Then, Dioscorus apologized on behalf of Eustathius and argued that the above interpretation of Cyril's Christology does not imply confusion between the two natures. Faced by the Council's Fathers, Dioscorus anathematized heretics who support confusion or changing or mixing of natures. "We speak of neither confusion nor division nor change. Anathema to whoever speaks of confusion or change or mixture", he declared.[83] After this intervention of Dioscorus, to convince his opponents, Eustathius adduced Cyrillian texts which argued in

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[76] Georgios Martzelos, *Ἱστορία τῆς Ὀρθόδοξης Θεολογίας καὶ πνευματικότητας. Σημειώσεις ἀπὸ τὶς πανεπιστημιακὲς παραδόσεις* (Thessaloniki 1991-92), 79 (in Greek).

[77] Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle 44. Πρὸς Εὐλόγιον*, PG 77, 225A*; Epistle 40. Πρὸς Ἀκάκιον*, PG 77, 193D-196A.

[78] See *Epistle 44. Πρὸς Εὐλόγιον*, PG 77, 225AB.

[79] See *Epistle 40. Πρὸς Ἀκάκιον*, PG 77, 193D-196A.

[80] See A. de Halleux, "Les douze chapitres cyrilliens au concile d'Ephèse (430-433)," *RThL [=Revue théologique de Louvain]*, 23 (1992): 454.

[81] See Martzelos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Βασιλείου Σελευκείας*, 92.

[82] See Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία*, 625.

[83] ACO, II,1,1,112; Acts, *op. cit.*, 185.

favour of his position, and taking into consideration the above theological position of Dioscorus, he anathematized those who support the use of the monophysite phrase to reject the consubstantiality of the human nature of Jesus with our own nature.[84]

It is obvious that during the Council of Chalcedon, Dioscorus and his followers did not accept that monophysitism leads to the denial of the reality of the human nature of Christ, nor that dyophysitism leads to the division of the two natures of Christ. Dioscorus emphasized that he accepts only the dyophysite phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" (from two natures) but not the phrase "two natures", insisting on the use of the monophysite formula "μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη" (one incarnate nature of God the Word), without confusion or change of natures. Dioscorus' confession in Chalcedon, "I accept 'from two [natures]'; I do not accept 'two'",[85] his position that "there are not two natures after the union"[86] and his insistence on Christological formula "one incarnate nature of God the Word",[87] was the cause of the disagreement with the decisions of Chalcedon. Dioscorus declared, "I have quotations from the holy Fathers Athanasius, Gregory and Cyril saying in numerous passages that one should not speak of two natures after the union but of one incarnate nature of the Word. I am being cast out together with the Fathers. I stand by the doctrines of the Fathers, and do not transgress in any respect. And I have these quotations not indiscriminately or in a haphazard form but in books", invoking the theological authority of the Fathers[88] and certainly of Cyril who, following Athanasius's Theology, used the monophysite Christological formula.[89]

Surely, no one knew then that the Christological formula '*one incarnate nature of God the Word'* was Apollinaristic,[90] but Cyril used this formula in an Orthodox way to fight against Nestorianism. According to Dioscorus, Cyril uses the term "nature" in the sense of "*hypostasis*-person". Consequently, the Christological formula "one incarnate nature of God the Word" is equated conceptually with the formula "one incarnate *hypostasis* of God the Word".[91] According to Dioscorus, Cyril used the above phrase because he wanted to emphasize that Jesus Christ is one person and one *hypostasis*; but since the participants in the session of Chalcedon drew up a dogmatic definition which contained the phrase "in two natures", (ἐν δύο φύσεσιν) which is equated conceptually in Dioscorus' Christological terminology with the phrase "*in two*

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[84] ACO, II,1,1,113.

[85] ACO, II,I,I,120; Acts, *op. cit.*, 194.

[86] ACO II,I,I,121; Acts, *op. cit.*, 196.

[87] See *Histoire de Dioscore*, *op. cit.*, 254.

[88] ACO II,1,1,117*;* Acts, *op. cit.*, 190.

[89] *Epistle 44. Πρὸς Εὐλόγιον*, PG 77, 225AB.

[90] See H. Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule: Texte und Untersuchungen* (Tübingen: Teubner 1904 and Hildesheim-New York 1970), 250-251.

[91] K. Khella, "Ein Dioskoros-zitat beim Patriarchen Benjamin," in *Probleme der koptischen Literaturwissenschaft. Wissenschaftliche Beitrage de Martin Luther* (Universität Halle - Wittenberg 1968), 193. See also Cyril of Alexandria, *Epistle 17. Πρὸς Νεστόριον ἐπιστολὴν Γ΄*, PG 77, 116C; *Κατὰ τῶν Νεστορίου δυσφημιῶν*, PG 76, 60D.

*hypostases*", they accepted, in his opinion, Nestorianism. According to Dioscorus, the phrase "in two natures" means that there are two persons; God the Word who was united with Jesus.[92] The above interpretation of Chalcedon's dyophysite Definition by Dioscorus implies exactly the identity between "nature" and "*hypostasis*" detected in texts of Cyril[93] and which Dioscorus accepts unconditionally. According to Dioscorus, just as the union of non-same natures, like soul and body results in the existence of a composite being that is man, who is one nature i.e. *hypostasis*; in the same way the result of the union of the divinity and humanity in Christ is the existence of one nature i.e. *hypostasis*.[94] It is precisely this identification between nature and *hypostasis* that Dioscorus accepts as a philosophical precondition.[95] Consequently, according to Dioscorus, the dyophysite Definition of Chalcedon negates the idea of unity and the identity of Jesus with God the Word.[96] The phrase "*two natures"* meant, for Dioscorus, "*two hypostases or persons".* If there are two natures in Christ, then there are two Persons.[97]

We must point out that Dioscorus never rejected dyophysite Christology of the previous patristic tradition like the Cappadocian Christology. So, why did he not interpret the dyophysite definition of Chalcedon in an Orthodox manner, taking into account the Cappadocian dyophysite terminology? Dioscorus' negative attitude towards the dyophysite Definition of Chalcedon was not dictated by any denial of the existence of human nature in Christ but by the act of the rehabilitation of the Antiochenes, who, during the Council of Ephesus (431), belonged to the same Nestorian theological camp. His theological opponents accused him of trying to revive docetic Christology because he rehabilitated Eutyches; in turn, he blamed the Council of Chalcedon for accepting the Nestorian Christology of Antiochenes, because the Council rehabilitated them.[98] For this reason, the Monophysite texts of the 5th and 6th century criticized the Council not so much for the dyophysite Definition of faith but for the rehabilitation of Ibas, Theodoret and other Antiochenes.[99] The vindication of the Antiochenes by the Council was, for the opponents of Chalcedon, an indirect rehabilitation of Nestorius and his theology, so much so that the non-Chalchedonian historian Zacharias agrees that the Council of Chalcedon revoked Nestorius' exile![100]

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[92] N. Khella, "Ein Dioskoros-zitat beim Patriarchen Benjamin," 193.

[93] See *Πρὸς τοὺς τολμῶντας συνηγορεῖν Β΄*, PG 76, 401A.

[94] W. Hatch, "A fragment of a lost work on Dioscorus," *Harvard Theological Review*, 19 (1926): 378.

[95] See "St. Cyril's 'One *physis* or hypostasis of God the Logos Incarnate' and Chalcedon," *GOTR* 10/2 (1964/1965): 95.

[96] K. Khella, "Ein Dioskoros-zitat beim Patriarchen Benjamin," 193.

[97] Ibid. See also *A Panegyric on Macarius bishop of Tkow attributed to Dioscorus of Alexandria translated by D.W. Johnson*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Vol. 415: *Scriptores coptici*, tomus 41 and Vol. 416, tomus 42 (translation) (Louvain 1980), 58.

[98] *Histoire de Dioscore*, *op. cit.*, 270.

[99] Ibid., 249.

[100] *The Syriac chronicle known as that of Zachariah of Mytilene*, translated into English by F. J. Hamilton and E. W. Brooks, (London 1899), 49.

However, Dioscorus was not negative towards all dyophysite phrases, thereby the union between Godhead and humanity was expressed by Dioscorus in the phrase 'ἐκ δύο φύσεων' (from two natures).[101] Dioscorus was not the first to use this phrase. Cyril used dyophysite phrases such as "from two natures",[102] "one out of two natures",[103] to indicate the diversity of elements that compose the person of Jesus Christ[104] and to express the view that Jesus Christ is compound because he consists of the nature of the Godhead and the nature of humanity. The use of the Cyrillian Christological formula "from two natures" reveals that Dioscorus accepts the actual presence of the human nature in the existence of Jesus Christ and that God the Word, after his human birth, is incarnate. Using the phrase "from two natures" indicates that two different natures, the Godhead and the humanity, are united in the existence of Jesus Christ.[105] Dioscorus did not deny that the natures united in Christ preserve their differences, but he insisted that they were no longer two ontologically distinct realities.[106] For this reason, Jesus Christ is God.[107]

The Council of Chalcedon did not oppose Dioscorus' attempt to emphasize the unity of the *hypostasis* of Jesus Christ, nor Dioscorus' Christological terminology because after the deposition of Dioscorus, the Council decided to establish a committee under Anatolius of Constantinople, taking over the task of drafting a doctrinal Definition. It is noteworthy that this first doctrinal Definition contained the Christological formula "from two natures"[108] which was used by Dioscorus! Unfortunately, this text did not receive unanimous acceptance because some Antiochenes and the Papal delegates thought that the phrase "from two natures" was monophysite. But the majority of the Fathers of the Council were against the above Antiochene interpretation of the phrase, and called those who were opposed to the phrase Nestorians and said that they were not disposed to amend the Definition of Faith because it was Orthodox![109] The uncompromising persistence of both sides gave an opportunity to the imperial representatives to undertake a mediating role by taking the part of the Papal delegates. The imperial representatives, to convince the Fathers to accept the modification of the Definition, connected the phrase "*from two natures*" with the face of the condemned Dioscorus, while the phrase "*two natures*", with the face of Flavian, who was sentenced unfairly by Dioscorus. In this way, Professor Martzelos suggests, the Fathers faced a symbolic dilemma: to choose between Dioscorus,

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[101] See. Khella, *Dioskoros I. von Alexandrien*, 27.

[102] *Ἐπιστολὴ 46. Πρὸς Σούκκενσον ἐπίσκοπον Διοκαισαρείας*, *Ἐπιστολὴ Β΄*, PG 77, 232D.

[103] See *Epistle 17. Πρὸς Νεστόριον ἐπιστολὴ Γ΄*, PG 77, 116A; *Περὶ τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος*, PG 75, 693A.

[104] *Ὁμιλίαι ἑορταστικαί*, PG 77, 572A.

[105] *Histoire de Dioscore*, *op. cit.*, 264.

[106] Ibid., 254. See also *A. Panegyric*, 72.

[107] *Histoire de Dioscore*, *op. cit.*, 293. See also *A Panegyric*, 27.

[108] See Georgios Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγὲς τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας. Συμβολὴ στὴν ἱστορικοδογματικὴ διερεύνηση τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Δ΄ Οἰκουμενικῆς συνόδου* (Thessaloniki: P. Pournaras, 1986), 126 (in Greek).

[109] See Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγὲς τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας*, 68-69.

who was condemned, and Flavian, who was acquitted by Chalcedon.[110] Anatolius overthrew the above dilemma by pointing out that Dioscorus was not found guilty because he was a heretic, but due to his irregular and non-canonical actions.[111] Anatolius' statement was accepted by the Fathers who ran counter to changing the first Definition of Faith. Even Eusebius Dorylaeum, who was deposed by the Synod of Ephesus (449), agreed with the Fathers, who accepted this first Definition, which contained Dioscorus' phrase *"from two natures"* and rejected any modification of the Definition.[112] The imperial delegates trying to reach an agreement between the two sides presented the Fathers with a new dilemma by saying that Dioscorus was in favour of the phrase "from two natures", while Leo was in favour of the phrase "two natures". "So whom do you follow—the most holy Leo, or Dioscorus?", the imperial delegates asked the Fathers.[113] Faced with this dilemma, the Fathers had no other choice. They could not speak out against Pope Leo, because they had accepted Leo's *Tome* and they cried: "We believe as Leo does. Those who object are Eutychianists. Leo's teaching was Orthodox". By doing so, the way opened for the final modification of the Definition, which replaced the phrase "from two natures" with the phrase "in two natures".[114]

The Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon deposed Dioscorus after the trial at the third session and deprived him of all priestly ministry. A letter was written to Dioscorus, announcing that he was deposed for disregarding the canons and disobeying the Council. The Council said to Dioscorus "On account of your contempt for the divine canons and your disobedience to this holy and Ecumenical Council, because, in addition to the other crimes for which you have been convicted, you did not present yourself even when summoned a third time by this holy and great Council according to the divine canons to answer the charges brought against you, know that on the present thirteenth day of the month of October you are deposed from the episcopate by the holy and Ecumenical Council and deprived of all ecclesiastical rank".[115] On the decision of the deposition there was no formal reading of a list of charges but general and specific references to crimes made by the bishops. His maltreatment of Eusebius of Dorylaeum was mentioned by one bishop, receiving Eutyches back into communion even before Ephesus II had revoked the decisions of the Home Synod of 448 was mentioned by Paschasinus, the allegedly unjust condemnation of Flavian was mentioned by several bishops, not permitting the reading of Leo's *Tome* at Ephesus and the excommunication of Pope Leo just before Chalcedon was specified as a crime in Paschasinus' letter to Marcian.[116] It was not felt necessary for the bishops to define the offences for which they judged Dioscorus to be guilty. Most of them restricted themselves to enunciating a bare sentence of

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[110] Ibid., 70-71.

[111] ACO II,1,2,124 (320).

[112] Ibid.

[113] ACO II,1,2,125 (321).

[114] Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγὲς τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας*, 75ff.

[115] ACO II,1,2,41; Acts, *op. cit.*, v. 2, Sessions II-X, 112-113.

[116] Acts, *op. cit.*, 32.

deposition. So what precisely was Dioscorus condemned for? Most obviously, he had incurred deposition by ignoring a threefold summons. This point was made again and again by the bishops. It was the only one of his offences that was constantly spelled out by his judges.[117] A question of particular interest is whether Dioscorus was condemned only for misconduct or also for heresy. The issue came sharply to the fore some days later at the fifth session when the wording of the Definition of Faith was under discussion. Archbishop Anatolius of Constantinople immediately objected. He declared, "It was not because of the faith that Dioscorus was deposed. He was deposed because he broke off communion with the lord Archbishop Leo and was summoned a third time and did not come". The fact that out of around 370 council members only around 200 turned up for the third session speaks clearly of a lack of enthusiasm among the bishops for Dioscorus' trial and deposition. It is manifest that the condemnation of Dioscorus failed to win consensus.[118] The point to be made is that the later accusation of Dioscorus as a Eutychian heretic is not validated based on the proceedings of Chalcedon.

Dioscorus had certainly given support to Eutyches but he had distanced himself from him at the first session of the Council.[119] His subsequent exile at Gangra was to denounce the Eutychian heresy of denying Christ's consubstantiality with the rest of the human race. During his exile (451-454), Dioscorus formed the basis of the non-Chalcedonian theology. The historical and theological testimonies indicate that Dioscorus and his followers turned against both Chalcedonian and Eutyches' Christology. We must note two important events.

First, the Ethiopian synaxary states that the Chalcedonian Archbishop of Alexandria Proterius proceeded to convene a regional Synod in Alexandria to condemn Eutyches' Christology in order to extend his influence of over the people who stayed faithful to Dioscorus. He believed that Dioscorus' followers would be reluctant to accept the decision of the Synod so it was an opportunity to reveal to the people of Alexandria, who were faithful to Dioscorus, that Dioscorus had the same views with Eutyches.[120] However his plans were unsuccessful. The cause of failure was due to the fact that supporters of Dioscorus unreservedly accepted the decision of the Synod which was convened by Proterius[121] because Dioscorus had anathematized Eutyches and those who supported the Docetism.[122] They followed the example of Dioscorus who condemned Eutyches and his Christology.[123]

Second, while in exile, Dioscorus sent an epistle to the monks of the Hennaton and an epistle to Secundinus which condemned Eutychian Christology. In the epistle to Secundinus, Dioscorus maintains that the body of

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[117] Ibid., 31.

[118] Ibid., 37;34.

[119] ACO II,1,1,92.

[120] *Le Synaxaire Ethiopien*, PO 9, 4, 372-373.

[121] Ibid., PO 9,4, 374.

[122] Ibid., PO 9,4. 373.

[123] Ibid.

Jesus Christ is not a spiritual body but material[124] containing all the elements that exist in our bodies.[125] Dioscorus defends the truth that God the Word assumed all the physical and spiritual elements of human nature. Although he was perfect God, he became perfect man.[126] The Archbishop of Alexandria argued that accepting the completeness and perfection of Christ's human nature is the necessary theological precondition for carrying out human salvation. God the Word became a perfect man and took all the elements of human existence, to heal and save the whole human being.[127] Dioscorus writes in the epistle to the Monks of the Hennaton: "The teachings of the Holy Bishops and Orthodox Archbishops have proved the fatuity of the affirmations of heretics...and they have banished from the hope of Christians who do not confess God the Word to be consubstantial with the Father, because He became consubstantial with man, taking flesh, although He remained unchangeably what He was before".[128]

Timothy Aelurus, in his letter to the people of Alexandria, quotes the Dioscorus' epistle to Secundinus to explain the reasons that led him to depose the Bishop Ermopolis Isaiah and the presbyter Theophilus who were Eutychians. As he notes, he acted this way because these clerics refused to accept the view that Jesus Christ is consubstantial with the rest of the human race. He justifies his action, arguing and closely following the example of Dioscorus, who anathematized all those who deny that Jesus Christ is consubstantial with us. This text of Dioscorus is a strong argument for Timothy to justify the act of deposition of the above clergy who were Eutychians. Timothy followed the example of Dioscorus who deposed and severed from the ecclesiastical communion the Eutychians.[129] All the above we mentioned signifies the theological separation of Dioscorus' followers from the Eutychians and show that Dioscorus was the one who caused this rupture. The ecclesiastical separation between Dioscorus' supporters and Eutyches' followers are recorded in the clearest manner by Timothy, a Chalcedonian and presbyter who writes: "Eutychians accept Eutyches and Dioscorus but the others (Dioscorus' followers) accept only Dioscorus and do not accept Eutyches".[130]

Nevertheless, the issue of Eutyches' rehabilitation by Dioscorus was not closed. During the intense ecclesiastical and theological controversy in the sixth century, Chalcedonians like Justinian and Eustathius the monk tried to connect Dioscorus' Christology with the Eutychian one, citing in their works an excerpt of a Dioscorus' epistle sent from exile, unknown until then. This excerpt refers to the fact that Christ's blood is the blood of a God by nature: "If Christ's blood was the blood of a human being by nature then it is not different from the blood of goats and calves; as the blood of animals which offered for sacrifice, is

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[124] R. Y. Ebied and L. R. Wickham, "A collection of unpublished letters of Timothy Aelurus," *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1970): 360.

[125] Ebied and Wickham, "A collection of Unpublished letters of Timothy Aelurus," 360.

[126] *The chronicle of Zachariah of Mitylene*, 45.

[127] Ibid., 45-46.

[128] S. G. F. Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus* (Dartford: Orient Press, 1881), 393.

[129] See Ebied and Wickham, "A collection of Unpublished letters of Timothy Aelurus," 357-360.

[130] *Περὶ τῶν προσερχομένων τῇ ἁγίᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ*, PG 86a, 53AC.

corruptible and earthly, in the same way the blood of the human beings is earthly and perishable and therefore there is no substantial difference; consequently the blood of Christ is not consubstantial with corruptible blood of a human being by nature".[131]

It should be noted that this text is not displayed in the Chalcedonian writings of the 5th century but only in the 6th century. What is the reason for this? It could be a strong theological argument of the Chalcedonians who would prove, in a most impressive manner, the heretical character of Dioscorus' Christology. Probably then, this text is a spurious theological text. However, the above position is moving within the confines of the hypothesis and is based solely on the fact that the Chalcedonians do not use it before the 6th century. If we accept that the text is genuine then there is a serious theological contradiction among this excerpt and the letter to Secundinus, which expresses the truth of Christ's consubstantiality with us. Why did Dioscorus and his followers interrupt ecclesiastical communion with supporters of Eutychian Christology since, according to the above passage, they accepted Eutychian Christology?

Athanasius of Alexandria faced a similar interpretive problem because Arians invoked some texts of Dionysius of Alexandria, in which the terminology was similar to Arian, to prove that Dionysius had the same views as Arius. But Athanasius was strongly arguing that Dionysius was Orthodox and he maintained that these controversial texts could not prove that Dionysius had similar views to Arius because the Arian's interpretive method was erroneous. According to Athanasius, the correct understanding of the texts requires knowledge and interpretation of all the works of the author.[132] We must know the reason for and purpose of the text written by the author,[133] we need to know the meaning of the theological terms used by the author and accurancy should not always be required in the words.[134]

Taking into account the above Athanasian interpretive preconditions, it should be noted that Dioscorus, in his epistle to Secundinus was trying to prove the consubstantiality of Jesus with us and lists all the elements of human nature received from the Virgin Mary as heart, bones, veins, nerves, lungs and logical soul[135]; on the contrary, in the excerpt of the epistle, Dioscorus mentioned only the blood of Christ, since being the blood of God, it is not the same as the blood of common human beings. The above texts serve two different theological purposes. The letter to Secundinus, describing the existence of Jesus through an ontological point of view, refers to the components that constitute his existence; the excerpt from the epistle attempts to describe the existence of Jesus from

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[131] See E. Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians*, AAM, N.F. 18 (München 1939), 24; (Milano [2]1973), 40(24); Eustathius the Monk, *Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Τιμόθεον Σχολαστικόν, περὶ δύο φύσεων κατὰ Σευήρου*, PG 86a, 933D.

[132] *Περὶ Διονυσίου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας, ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς κατὰ τῆς ἀρειανικῆς αἱρέσεως ἐφρόνει ὡς ἡ ἐν Νικαίᾳ σύνοδος καὶ μάτην αὐτὸν συκοφαντοῦσιν οἱ Ἀρειομανίται, ὡς ὁμόδοξον ἑαυτῶν*, PG 25, 485A.

[133] Ibid., PG 25, 485AB.

[134] Ibid., PG 25, 488B.

[135] Ebied and Wickham, "A collection of unpublished letters of Timothy Aelurus," 360. See also Zachariah of Mytilene, 45-46.

through a soteriological point of view. Dioscorus wanted to show the divine power of Jesus' human nature to save the human being. Therefore, he tried to confirm the ontological transcendence of the existence of Jesus over that of ordinary people who do not have the natural power to provide salvation. The term "blood" in the excerpt, although it is an ontological element of the common human nature, turns out to be a soteriological element with one intense Eucharistic background. The eating of the body and blood of Jesus, who is not a divine man, but the incarnate God, implants into us the power of redemption.

We follow the opinion that the controversial characterizations of the excerpt for the blood of Jesus such as "non-consubstantial", "non-earthen" and "non-perishable" [136] have the same meaning with terms used by Cyril of Alexandria to characterize the blood of Jesus as having a clear anti-adoptionistic character. It is noteworthy that Cyril calls Jesus' flesh "divine",[137] "celestial",[138] "spirit",[139] supporting that Christ's blood is not the blood of a common human being but the blood of God and therefore divine.[140] Cyril, unlike adoptionistic Christology, recognizes not only moral superiority but ontological superiority of the body and blood of Christ as compared with the body and blood of common and ordinary human beings. The ontological superiority of Christ is emphasized by Cyril interpreting the passage *Hebrews 3:5*, where Christ is compared with Moses, revealing an "essential difference" (τῆς οὐσιώδους ποιότητος τὴν διαφορὰν δεικνύει) between Christ and Moses, and consequently between Christ and all human beings. According to Cyril, Christ has ontological superiority over Moses and consequently Christ is not homogeneous (ὁμογενής) and connatural (ὁμοφυής) with Moses and other human beings.[141] Consequently, the blood of Jesus is the blood of God the Word and so it becomes the life-giving blood.[142] Instead, Nestorius did not accept the Cyrillian view above because he believed that it could result in confusion of the natures of Jesus; on the contrary, Cyril stressed that the flesh of Jesus did not turn into Divinity but became Divine because it belongs to God. Cyril asks, "If the flesh of man is called human, what prevents us from calling the flesh of God the Word divine?"[143]

We support the view that the excerpt of the epistle depends theologically on the above Cyrillian passages. Just as Cyril calls the body and blood of Christ Divine, without denying the consubstantiality of human nature with us, in the same way Dioscorus recognizes that there is an ontological superiority of Christ's blood as compared with the blood of ordinary people without denying the

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[136] Eustathius the Monk, PG 86a, 933D; Schwartz, *Drei dogmatische Schriften Iustinians*, 24.

[137] *Κατὰ τῶν Νεστορίου δυσφημιῶν*, PG 76, 96A; *Προσφωνητικὸς ταῖς εὐσεβεστάταις βασιλίσσαις*, PG 76, 1296B.

[138] *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην*, PG 73, 600D-601A.

[139] Ibid., PG 73, 604B.

[140] See also *Προσφωνητικός*, PG 76, 1252CD; *Διάλεξις πρὸς Νεστόριον ὅτι Θεοτόκος ἡ ἁγία παρθένος*, PG76, 281D; *Προσφωνητικός*, PG 76, 1253A.

[141] *Ἡ Βίβλος τῶν Θησαυρῶν*, PG 75, 496AB. See also Athanasius of Alexandria, *Κατά Ἀρειανῶν*, PG 26, 168BC.

[142] See *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην*, PG73, 584A.

[143] *Κατὰ τῶν Νεστορίου δυσφημιῶν*, PG 76, 96A.

consubstantiality of Christ with us, as stated in his letter to the Secundinus. Dioscorus does not accept the adoptionist Christological idea, according to which Christ has a merely moral superiority over other human beings. Although Jesus has a real human nature, as evident in his letter to Secundinus, his blood becomes the source of salvation due to the real union with God the Word. Dioscorus does not deny that Jesus Christ is consubstantial with us but refuses to accept the Nestorian interpretation of the phrase "consubstantial to us" according to which, consubstantial with us implies a common and ordinary man who is united with God the Word.[144]

The soteriological consequences are tremendous. Christ's blood is not the blood of one ordinary man but the blood of God the Word who became true man. The incarnate God was sacrificed for the human race and made his body and blood, which are consubstantial with our own body and blood, the source of salvation and immortality, thus implanting the power of redemption. By the Holy Communion this divine power of Christ spread out from his body into the rest of the human race, to reconstitute human nature into the graced and deified condition of the Saints.

*Conclusion*

In conclusion, we are of the opinion that Dioscorus was a Cyrillian theologian. He wasn't a Eutychian heretic. He never denied the reality of Jesus' human nature. Chalcedon did not find him guilty for heresy and Anatolius declared that he was not condemned for heresy. The accusation of heresy made by many Chalcedonians[145] in the following centuries is due to the intense ecclesiastical conflict between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians. There is no contradiction because the task of a Council in defining Orthodoxy and the task of a bishop or a theologian in protecting the unity of the Church are two quite different things. Athanasius of Alexandria taught us that when interpreting the ecclesiastical events and the theological texts we must take into account the historical circumstances,[146] the particular purpose[147] and the reason[148] for which something is done. Consequently, we must be able to distinguish between the theological accuracy of the doctrinal texts of the Council of Chalcedon and the preaching of the Chalcedonian Fathers who, during a particular theological conflict in the 5th and 6th centuries, characterized Dioscorus as a heretic to define the boundaries between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches.

Some Chalcedonian theologians like Tselegidis[149] and Larchet[150] ignore the above patristic interpretive presuppositions. They try to prove that Dioscorus

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[144] See the Nestorian view: Cyril of Alexandria, *Κατὰ τῶν Νεστορίου δυσφημιῶν*, PG 76, 157BCD.

[145] See Timothy the Presbyter, PG 86a, 53C; Sophronius of Jerusalem, PG 87C, 3192A.

[146] *Περὶ Διονυσίου*, PG 25,485C, 488A.

[147] *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων ἐν τῇ Ἀριμίνῳ τῆς Ἰταλίας, καὶ ἐν Σελευκείᾳ τῆς Ἰσαυρίας συνόδων*, PG 26,776B.

[148] *Περὶ Διονυσίου*, PG 25, 485B; 488A; 497C; *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων*, PG 26, 773B.

[149] See *op. cit.*, 309ff.

[150] Larchet, *Personne et nature*, 135-138; idem, *Τὸ Χριστολογικὸ Πρόβλημα*, 82-84.

is a heretic, quoting the opinion of some Fathers, who within a particular historical context argued that Dioscorus had the same opinions as Eutyches. They do not investigate the reason or the purpose for which the Fathers have expressed this view and they do not take into account the ecclesiastico-political context. They do not interpret the particular opinion of the Fathers taking into account also the declaration of Anatolius, the content of the condemnation of Dioscorus by Chalcedon and the rejection of Eutychianism by Dioscorus at Chalcedon and after Chalcedon.

Tselegidis' and Larchet's interpretive method is mistaken. In 4th century, the followers of Arius used a similar interpretive method to prove that the Nicene Creed was contrary to the decision of the synod of Antioch (268), which rejected the use of *homoousios* (consubstantial). The Arians did not take into account the historical and theological context of this disapproval and they accused Nicaea (325) of innovation. The objectors to the Nicene doctrine in the 4th century made copious use of this disapproval of the word *homoousios* by the Synod of Antioch.[151] Indeed, at the synod of Antioch in 268, the bishops, who condemned Paul of Samosata, rejected the term *homoousios*, but naturally only in the false sense used by Paul who intended by it a common substance out of which both Father and Son proceeded, or which was divided between them. Athanasius of Alexandria caring little for the words and much for the sense,[152] proved that the Arians' interpretive method was wrong. He insists on saying that the term *homoousios* was rejected in one sense by those who condemned Paul of Samosata and championed in another sense by those who resisted the Arian heresy. Athanasius tried tendentiously to resolve the apparent contradiction between Antioch and Nicaea, taking into account the historical–theological context and the purpose of each synod. Athanasius states, "So, if the Fathers of the two Councils made different mention of the homoousion, we ought not in any respect to differ from them, but to investigate their meaning, and this will fully show us the agreement of both the Councils. Yes surely, each Council has a sufficient reason for its own language". [153] In the same way, Chalcedon setaccurate limits between heresy and Orthodoxy and so the Council did not condemn Dioscorus for heresy and Anatolius said that Dioscorus was not heretic; on the contrary many Fathers in the next centuries, in order to protect the members of the Chalcedonian Church from the influence of the non-Chalcedonian theology, agreed that Dioscorus, who rejected the Council of Chalcedon, was like-minded and the defender of Eutyches. Consequently, anyone who rejected Chalcedon, like Dioscorus, was heretical.

There is no contradiction between the council of Chalcedon and the Fathers who accused Dioscorus of heresy because according to Gregorius Palamas, "the disputation over the Orthodox faith differs from the confession of faith. In disputation, it is not required accuracy in words, while in confession of

[151] *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων*, PG 26, 772AD.

[152] *Περὶ Διονυσίου*, PG 25, 509A; *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων*, PG 26, 772C; PG 26, 777B.

[153] *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων*, PG 26, 773ABCD.

faith, accuracy in words is required and must be respected".[154] Chalcedon defined and confessed with accuracy the Orthodox faith; but after Chalcedon, the Fathers, in their polemic against non-Chacedonians, used the name of Eutyches loosely to categorize Dioscorus as a follower of Eutyches. The reasons for these accusations were pastoral. According to Professor Martzelos, the Fathers did not care to analyse theoretically Dioscorus' Christology but to criticize Dioscorus for rejecting the faith of Chalcedon, and therefore he divided the Church. The faith is not an ideology and for the Fathers, the criterion of Orthodoxy is not ideological but deeply ecclesiological: the acceptance of the Ecumenical Councils. The Fathers were interested in the ecclesiological consequences of the rejection of Chalcedon by Dioscorus. It was the unity of the Church that the Fathers were concerned to maintain, not some strict and academic analysis of Dioscorus' Christology.[155]

Nevertheless, what was the fault of Dioscorus? Dioscorus was not an able theologian like his predecessors, Cyril and Athanasius. He failed to interpret Cyril's Christology in the historical and theological context and so he rejected Chalcedon. "I have quotations from the holy Fathers Athanasius, Gregory and Cyril saying in numerous passages that one should not speak of two natures after the union but of one incarnate nature of the Word", he declared at Chalcedon,[156] without considering why and when the Fathers said this. But one word, one phrase, out of historical and theological context, says nothing. Cyril was to fight against the denial of Jesus' divine nature set by Nestorius and so he insisted on using the monophysite formula; on the contrary, Chalcedon was to fight against the denial of the reality of Jesus' human nature set by Eutyches and as a result a dyophysite terminology was chosen to be used. The theological challenge was different; consequently, Chalcedon used different terms from Cyril as the Fathers of Nicaea (325) did, who adopted the term *homoousios* which was rejected by the Synod of Antioch (268).[157] Dioscorus' Christology lacked flexibility, so he was not able to adopt the Chalcedonian interpretation of Cyril's Christology. His insistence on the monophysite formula as the only acceptable basis for faith and his concomitant horror of 'innovation' was a view shared by his colleagues at Chalcedon and after Chalcedon. Unfortunately, today, Dioscorus' horror of "innovation" is shared by many non-Chalcedonian and Chalcedonian theologians. In the modern theological dialogue between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonians, we must not make the same mistakes. We must interpret the Christological controversy in its historical and theological context by comprehending the exact meaning of theological terms, as the wise Athanasius did. Only in this way, will dialogue yield results.

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[154] See I. Karmiris, *Τὰ δογματικὰ καὶ συμβολικὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, vol. I (Athens $^{2}$1960), 378.

[155]Georgios Martzelos, "Η ἐπιστημονικότητα μίας 'ἐπιστημονικῆς κριτικῆς' στὴ διδακτορικὴ διατριβὴ τοῦ Ἠλ. Κεσμίρη, "Η Χριστολογία καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ πολιτικὴ τοῦ Διοσκόρου Ἀλεξανδρείας'," *Γρηγ. Παλ.* 86,798 (2003): 594.

[156] ACO II,1,1,117.

[157] *Ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τῶν γενομένων*, PG 26, 773ABCD.

# The Issue of Wills and Energies in the Perspective of the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox

*Fr. Cyril Hovorun*

One of the most difficult issues on the theological agenda of the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox is agreement on the Council of Constantinople 680-681, known also as Constantinople III or the Sixth Ecumenical Council, and its dogmatic constitutions. In the frame of the Dialogue, this issue has been overshadowed by the discussions on the Council of Chalcedon. However, without properly addressing the problems connected with the Council of 680-681, which the Eastern Orthodox regard as ecumenical and the Oriental Orthodox as heretical, the dialogue cannot conclude with success. The Council condemned as heresy the so-called monoenergism and monothelitism. This was a decision directed not against the non-Chalcedonian Christians, but against Chalcedonians who upheld that Christ had two natures and simultaneously one activity (ἐνέργεια) and will (θέλημα). Nevertheless, the Oriental Christians still take this condemnation personally. This is because they firmly believe that we can only speak about single *energeia* and will in Christ. The Eastern Orthodox do not accept this language. That is the difference between the theological language of Chalcedon, which allows both expressions—one nature and two natures of Christ—and Constantinople III, which allows only the language of two *energeiai* and wills. This difference makes an agreement on the issue of activities and wills in Christ even harder to achieve than the agreement on Christ's natures. Therefore, it is crucially important for the parts of the Dialogue to understand the historical circumstances and theological rationale of the Council of 680-681.

This Council concluded a half-century of a doctrinal discussion that is believed to be among the most fruitful in Church history. This controversy introduced the issues of will, action, and freedom to speculative thought—issues that have become central in contemporary philosophy and theology. One should remember that these categories were not elaborated, at least in terms of abstract thinking, during Antiquity. They were placed on the philosophical and theological agendas primarily because of the efforts of the seventh-century Christian theologians.

Constantinople III itself did not produce any significant theology. Its results were an abbreviated version of what had been written about the issue of Christ's actions and wills one or two generations earlier. The Council mostly inquired into the theological controversy that had taken place between the third and the sixth decades of the seventh century. The controversy was provoked by a theological formula that predicated the existence of two natures and one act (ἐνέργεια) in Christ. This formula artificially combined two separate statements: that Christ had two natures and that He performed one act. The former

statement was derived from Chalcedonian theology while the latter came from the terminology of Severus, the Patriarch of Antioch (465-538), a leader of the resistance to Chalcedon. The target of the formula was the Christian population in Egypt and Syria that did not accept the Chalcedonian definition of "one Christ in two natures". Its purpose was to reconcile the adversaries of Chalcedon with its followers. The first part of the formula, "two natures", had to satisfy the Chalcedonians, while the second part, "one action", had to please the anti-Chalcedonians. The formula, which was later termed monoenergism, became a part of an important ecumenical undertaking.

The monoenergist ecumenical project was set up by Emperor Heraclius (575-641; r. 610-641) and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Sergius I (610-638). They came to power in their respective political and ecclesiastical spheres almost simultaneously in 610. They also died within two years of each other. The coexistence and collaboration of the two powers, political and ecclesiastical, during the three decades of their rule was smooth and close to the Byzantine ideal of symphony.

In the spirit of symphony, Emperor and Patriarch together confronted the challenge of Persian invasions of the Byzantine domain. The Persian path to Byzantium ran across the empire's eastern territories, which were populated by Christians who did not accept the Council of Chalcedon. As a result, these subjects were likely to collaborate with the Persian intruders. Therefore, an ecumenical agreement was an urgent necessity to win the favour of those people in order to preserve the integrity of the empire.

Monoenergism was not intended at the outset as a new self-sufficient doctrine but solely as a broader interpretation of the Chalcedonian faith designed to reconcile Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians. Its authors permitted a double interpretation of the number of activities. They suggested that it could be both one and two. Later, during the second phase of the controversy, they would insist that Christ's works represent only one activity. In the third phase, monoenergism turned into monothelitism, a doctrine that maintained that Christ had a single will, while remaining in two natures.

After theologians composed the formula "two natures; one activity", Emperor Heraclius started promoting it, often in person. He met with leaders of various non-Chalcedonian communities and persuaded them to restore communion with the Chalcedonian Churches on the basis of this formula. He also propagated the formula among the Chalcedonians. A characteristic imperial visitation was recorded in 627, when the Emperor traveled to Lazica, the western part of present-day Georgia. While staying in the Lazic port of Phasis on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, Heraclius had a theological discussion with Cyrus, the local bishop. Cyrus was a Chalcedonian and apparently believed that Christ had two *energeiai*; he was therefore reluctant to accept a formula affirming single activity. He sent a letter to Patriarch Sergius asking him to elucidate the issue. In his response, Sergius tried to dispel Cyrus's doubts by saying that none of the ecumenical or other Orthodox Councils had clearly stated whether there are two or one activities in Christ. He eventually won over Cyrus, who became in turn one of the protagonists of monoenergism.

Cyrus was elected to the Patriarchal throne of Alexandria in 631. He was also invested with the secular power of an Egyptian prefect. One of his major tasks was achieving reconciliation with the anti-Chalcedonians of Egypt, on the basis of the monoenergist formula. During his first two years in Alexandria, Cyrus had managed to establish regular contacts with the leaders of the anti-Chalcedonian communities and convinced some of them to accept the Chalcedonian formula with the monoenergist insertion. A formal union on the basis of the monoenergist confession was proclaimed on June 3, 633, in the Caesareum, the cathedral of Alexandria. This proclamation resulted in the Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians sharing in the Eucharist.

This ecumenical achievement of Cyrus, however, caused dissatisfaction among many Chalcedonians. Before declaring the Alexandrian agreement, Cyrus had consulted Sophronius (560-638), a widely known abbot who was a refugee from Palestine. Sophronius criticised the agreement and tried to persuade Cyrus to abandon it. After Cyrus refused to yield, Sophronius appealed to the Patriarch of Constantinople. He went to the capital city in 633 and discussed the matter with Sergius. Sergius realised the potential danger of divisions within the Chalcedonian camp as result of the monoenergist interpretation of the Chalcedonian definition. He issued a statement called *Psephos*, which prohibited any references to either one or two *energeiai* and instead promoted the use of language referring to the single subject of activities in Christ.

Following his trip to Constantinople, Sophronius was elected Patriarch of Jerusalem at the end of 633 or beginning of 634. According to custom, he circulated an enthronement letter addressed to other Patriarchs. He used this opportunity to communicate his dyoenergist position to all the Churches, particularly to the Church of Rome. Sergius decided to send his own account of monoenergism to Pope Honorius I (625-638). In his letter, he placed the concept of a single *energeia* in the context of the distinction between the two natures in Christ and interpreted it in the spirit of the communicatio idiomatum (or communication of idioms). The Pope sent a reply, in which he approved the position of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and went even further confessing existence of a single will in Christ. He thus introduced a doctrine, which was called monothelitism. While monothelitism had existed in embryonic form in the preceding monoenergist documents, it was openly proclaimed for the first time by Pope Honorius. Honorius thus unintentionally set off a new phase of the controversy, when the concept of monoenergism was left aside and monothelitism emerged instead.

In 634, Muslims from Arabia invaded the Byzantine Empire and began their swift advance into Roman Syria; in August 636 the imperial army was defeated at Yarmouk, near the border between present-day Syria and Jordan. As a result, the Byzantines were forced to abandon Syria, which was overrun by Arab troops who pushed further into upper Mesopotamia. The empire lost vast territories, including the Holy Land. The Arabs then invaded Egypt in 639 and completed their conquest of it in 641. These military reverses compelled the Emperor and his ecclesiastical allies to refocus their attention and stop promoting monoenergism throughout the empire. In the last years of his life, however, Heraclius came back to his monoenergist project and attempted to

revive it. In 638 he issued the *Ekthesis*, a document that had the character of statutory law. On the one hand, it strictly prohibited any debate regarding the *energeiai* in Christ. On the other hand, it asserted a single will in Christ.

What was the reason for the Emperor's decision to place the issue back on the political agenda? Perhaps Heraclius wanted once more to attract the non-Chalcedonians or expected a future implementation of the new formula, given that the Byzantines hoped to recapture the occupied territories. Or perhaps he wanted to sum up and reconfirm the achievements of his ecclesiastical policy before leaving the political scene. It is also possible that he sincerely believed at the end of his life that monenergism-monothelitism represented true Christian Orthodoxy and must be unanimously confessed throughout the empire. Perhaps by issuing the *Ekthesis* he was leaving to his successor his last will regarding ecclesiastical policy. We cannot answer any of these questions with certainty. Heraclius's motives remain obscure and constitute one of the major puzzles in the history of the controversy.

Patriarch Sergius, Heraclius's faithful companion for almost thirty years, died on December 9, 638. The Emperor was also near the end of his life and wanted someone similar to Sergius as his replacement. He found the character of Sergius embodied in Pyrrhus, the prominent abbot of the monastery of Chrysopolis, on the Anatolian shore of the Bosphorus. As Patriarch of Constantinople, Pyrrhus (638-641; January-June 654) continued to implement the policies of monothelitism. At this point, Maximus the Confessor (580–662), a scholarly monk then living in Carthage, emerged as the major adversary of monothelitism.[1]

Maximus wrote a number of polemical treatises against monothelitism and organised resistance to it in North Africa and Italy. He changed the mind of the Western bishops concerning the issue of the activities and wills in Christ. Although monothelitism had been initially suggested by the western Pope Honorius, the bishops in the West turned away from it as a result of Maximus's efforts. A series of local councils in the Western Europe and northern Africa were then held to express formal rejection of the doctrine, even though it had been promoted by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Constantinople.

After Heraclius's death on February 11, 641, his successors sought to restore doctrinal agreement with Rome. Emperor Constans II (641-668), the grandson of Heraclius, attempted reconciliation by issuing the *Typos*, a decree that prohibited both two-wills and one-will formulas. This document brought to a close the imperial promotion of the doctrines of the single action and will in Christ. By that time, however, the intensive theological discussions provoked by

[1] See the most recent publications on Maximus's input to the controversy: *Knowing the Purpose of Creation Through the Resurrection. Proceedings of the Symposium on St Maximus the Confessor*, Belgrade, October 18-21, 2012, ed. Maksim Vasiljević (Alhambra, Calif.: Sebastian Press, 2013); Melchisedec Törönen, *Union and Distinction in the Thought of St. Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Demetrios Bathrellos, *The Byzantine Christ: Person, Nature, and Will in the Christology of Saint Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Pauline Allen and Neil Bronwen, *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions: Documents From Exile* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Heraclius led to the emergence of two distinct doctrines that developed independently of the political process.

Monoenergism-monothelitism and dyoenergism-dyothelitism evolved into two complex doctrinal systems. Each of them had specific interpretations not only of Christ's actions and wills, but also of His natural properties, natures, and *hypostasis*. At the same time, the two systems had a common background—that of neo-Chalcedonianism, which was a synthesis of the theological languages of Cyril of Alexandria and of the Council of Chalcedon.

In the spirit of neo-Chalcedonianism, Pope Martin I (649-653) convoked in 649 a council, which was held in the basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome. It discussed theological issues related to the activities and will of Christ. The arguments of this council were developed by Maximus and his disciples. In defiance of Constans's *Typos*, the council explicitly confirmed the doctrine of the two *energeiai* and wills in Christ; condemned the *Ecthesis* and the *Typos*; and anathematized Theodore of Pharan, Cyrus of Alexandria, Patriarchs Sergius and Pyrrhus, and Paul of Constantinople. The Lateran council was a political rebellion. As a result, Pope Martin was arrested and brought to Constantinople for trial. He was charged in court with treason, deposed, defrocked, and exiled to Chersonese (present-day Sevastopol), where he died on September 16, 655. Maximus was also severely punished. He was accused of political treason and denial of the Emperor's right to define dogmas of the Church. Eventually he was found guilty, tortured, had his right hand and his tongue cut off, and exiled to Lazica, where he died of his injuries on August 13, 662.

Constans II was assassinated in 668 at the age of thirty-seven; his son Constantine IV Pogonatus ("the Bearded"; 652-685) became the new Emperor. The difficult military situation and ongoing threats from the Arabs did not allow him to pay much attention to ecclesiastical matters. By 670 the Arabs had captured Cyprus, Rhodes, Kos, and Cyzicus; in 672, Smyrna also fell into their hands. The invaders' ultimate goal was Constantinople, which was eventually blockaded by the Arabs for five successive summers. The Byzantine forces, however, managed to contain the Arabs and even to defeat them in several important battles. As a result Constantine IV forced them to sign a thirty-year truce in 678. He used this breathing space to turn to the internal problems of the state, including its ecclesiastical divisions. The main thrust of his policy was to allow the Church to make its own decisions concerning doctrine without direct imperial interventions. The best means for arriving at these decisions would be a major council.

To implement this decision under current conditions was not an easy task, however, given Arab control of the eastern territories and Egypt. The dioceses under Arab occupation were unable to send their representatives to Constantinople. The decision was therefore made to convoke an episcopal conference. Pope Agatho (June 678-January 681) fully supported the Emperor's initiative but decided to first enlist the support of the western bishops. He summoned local synods in different western provinces, the most notable being held in Milan and at Hatfield in Britain in 680. A local synod of the Roman Church was also convoked with 125 bishops in attendance. Its decisions were set out in two "suggestions" addressed to Constantine, one from the Pope and the

other from the Council. These letters were read at the fourth session of the Council and then referred to in its definition.

In the meantime the political situation in the East had changed, and the dioceses in the territories occupied by the Arabs were eventually able to send their representatives to the Council. The newly elected Patriarch of Constantinople, George I (679-686), persuaded the Emperor to turn the proposed conference into a full-fledged council. The Council commenced its work on November 7, 680 and lasted until September 16, 681, with eighteen working sessions. The monothelite party was headed by the Patriarch of Antioch, Macarius, and his disciple Stephanus. The Council examined various acts, collections, and other documents relevant to the issue under consideration during its working sessions in order to establish their authenticity. Because of the Council's interest in documentary evidence, Adolf von Harnack called it "the Council of antiquaries and palaeographists".[2]

During the Council's fifteenth session, it investigated a curious episode involving a monk named Polychronius, who had presented a book containing a monothelite confession of faith. Polychronius claimed that God himself had revealed it to him. He asked the Council to have the book placed on a corpse that he believed would be resurrected. A cadaver was duly brought to the public baths of Zeuxippus, where Polychronius laid his book on the corpse and "whispered" in the dead person's ear for "many hours", as the acts of the Council report. The corpse did not revive. After this public failure, Polychronius was given a chance to recant his monothelitism. He refused, however, and was anathematized, sent to Rome, and confined in a monastery, where he died without recanting.

After all due inquiries, the Council condemned the teaching about a single *energeia* and will in Christ. It anathematized Pope Honorius; the Patriarchs of Constantinople Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paul, and Peter; Cyrus, the Patriarch of Alexandria; Theodore, the bishop of Pharan; Macarius the Patriarch of Antioch, Stephan, Polychronius, and a certain Apergius, bishop of Perge on the southwestern Mediterranean coast of present-day Turkey. During the last two sessions, the Council adopted its final definition (*Horos*), which summarised the dyoenergist-dyothelite doctrine and declared it to be the correct teaching of the Church.

What are the main features of this teaching and how does it differ from monoenergism-monothelitism? A starting point for both doctrinal systems was the unity of the person of Christ, which means that there is only one subject of all Christ's actions—a single Christ. But the two groups drew different conclusions from the commonly recognised fact that there is only One-Who-acts (that is, Christ). The monoenergists concluded that Christ has only one *energeia*; for example, Pyrrhus stated: "If he who acts is single, then the *energeia* is single too, as belonging to the single (i.e. Christ)".[3] This statement does not mean that the single action is entirely divine. It has a certain relation to both human and

[2] Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Vol. IV (New York: Dover, 1961), 261.

[3] *Disputatio cum Pyrrho*, PG 91, 340A.

divine natures and could not be identified either with the divine or the human *energeia*. It consists of divine and human actions combined in a single *energeia*.

For the dyoenergists, however, the One and the same One-Who-Acts does so not monadically, as it were, but doubly, according to Maximus the Confessor. This point is not as easy to grasp logically as that proposed by the monoenergists. In order to explain this double action, the dyoenergist bishops referred first to the fact that the subjects of actions cannot act on their own. To be revealed as a subject of activity, a person must have a nature. This idea was articulated by Maximus of Aquileia at the fifth session of the Lateran council: "Although the will belongs to him who wills and the *energeia* belongs to him who acts, they (belong) not to him who simply wills, but who wills according to the nature, and not to him who simply acts, but who acts according to the nature".[4] To prove this point, he added that *energeia* and will have an appellation that characterises them as belonging to a certain nature: either it is human, angelic, or divine: "Every (activity and will) has as its appellation the nature of those who act and will. Thus, we call human the will and *energeia* of man, angelic we call the will and *energeia* of an angel, and divine we call the will and *energeia* of God. Therefore, the teachers of the catholic Church ascribe each one, I mean divine and human (*energeia* and will) to the same who is God and man".[5]

As with many other arguments interspersed throughout the acts of the Lateran council, this one is derived from the works of Maximus the Confessor. To Maximus, the alleged single will of Christ cannot be given any proper name. If the single will were called composite, it would not be identical with the will of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. If it were called natural, this locution would confuse the two natures of Christ. If it were named hypostatic, then the Holy Trinity would be divided into three parts by three different wills. If it were called relative, this definition would divide the person of Christ and lead to Nestorianism. If the will were disposed contrary to nature (παρὰ φύσιν), it would destroy the integrity of Christ. Finally, if it were left without a proper name, it would be absurd. This argument can be traced back to Aristotle and his *Categories*. The philosopher in particular spoke of things that are called synonymously from substances. These synonymous things have the same name and the same definition:

> But synonymous things were precisely those with both the name in common and the same definition. Hence, all the things called from substances and differentiae are so called synonymously.[6]

Some things are called by paronymy and take their names from other things to which they are related:

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[4] *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum. Series Secunda* (Berlin: De Gruyter; henceforth $ACO_2$), I $344^{39}$-$346^{1}$; $ACO_2$ I $345^{38}$-$347^{2}$.

[5] $ACO_2$ I $346^{3-7}$; $ACO_2$ I $347^{2-6}$.

[6] Aristotle, *Categories, and De Interpretatione*, translated with notes by J. L. Ackrill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 3.

> When things get their name from something, with a difference of ending, they are called paronymous. Thus, for example, the grammarian gets his name from grammar, the brave get theirs from bravery.[7]

In order to prove that a single subject does not necessarily comprise only one activity, the dyoenergists tried to clarify the way, in which the *energeiai* relate to their subject; that is, the *hypostasis* of Christ. For this purpose, they enunciated several formulas, the most famous of which was an application of the definition of Chalcedon: "The difference of the natures is not destroyed because of the union, but on the contrary, the character of each nature is preserved and comes together in one person and one *hypostasis*".[8] What is said here concerning the natural properties, the dyoenergists-dyothelites applied to the *energeiai* and wills of Christ, which they placed among the natural properties. Thus, the *energeiai* and the wills, to them, concur and meet each other in the *hypostasis*, as it was stated in the *Horos* of the Council of Constantinople: "We confess two wills and two operations, concurring most fitly for the salvation of the human race".[9]

Sophronius clarified the role of the *hypostasis* in the processes of acting and willing in more detail. He defined the *hypostasis* of Christ as the "seat" (ἕδρα) of the natures and therefore of the *energeiai* and wills. In the link between the *hypostasis* and the *energeiai*, the *hypostasis* plays not only the static role of a place or a seat in which the activities meet each other, but also a dynamic role of distributing, controlling, and ruling. Such a role was implied again by Sophronius, who characterized the *hypostasis* in its relation with the *energeiai* as a controller (ταμείας) and chief (πρύτανης).

When the monoenergists suggested that there is only a single action in Christ, they liked to refer to the fourth epistle to Gaius from the *Corpus Areopageticum*:

> For, even, to speak summarily, He was not a man, not as "not being man", but as "being from men was beyond men", and was above man, having truly been born man; and for the rest, not having done things divine as God, nor things human as man, but exercising for us *a certain new theandric energy* of God having become man.[10]

This statement became a challenge for the dyoenergists, who did not argue against it but rather produced their own interpretation of the phrase. Thus Sophronius distinguished three kinds of *energeiai* in Christ: divine, human, and a third *energeia* that he termed *theandric* (divine-manly).[11] According to Sophronius' interpretation, the third *energeia* is not a single activity, but a composite of two different and unconfused activities. The dyoenergist interpretation of the Dionysian formula was developed further at the Lateran council. For example,

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[7] Ibid., 3.

[8] R. Norris, *The Christological Controversy*, Sources of Early Christian Thought (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 159.

[9] $ACO_2$ $II^2$ $776^{17-18}$.

[10] *Corpus Dionysiacum II: Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita. De coelesti hierarchia, de ecclesiastica hierarchia, de mystica theologia, epistulae*, ed. by G. Heil and A. M. Ritter, Patristische Texte und Studien 36 (Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991), 161; PG 3, 1072BC.

[11] $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $456^{12-15}$.

Pope Martin interpreted it as implying two activities united in the same way as the natures of Christ: "The holy Dionysius did not wish to profess a single *energeia*, as they say, but a dual *energeia* of the one who is dual in nature, and so he used a composite expression denoting his two activities, according to (their) unity".[12] Pope Martin tried to explain why Dionysius spoke of this double *energeia* as a single entity. For him, it was due to the *communicatio idiomatum* and the unity of the two natures in Christ. Contrary to Sophronius, Martin did not refer to pure divine or human *energeiai*; in his thinking, all *energeiai* of Christ are theandric and retain features of both natures. Behind Martin's interpretation of the Dionysian formula lay the work of Maximus the Confessor. In his *Ambiguum* 5 he wrote that the Dionysian "new theandric *energeia*" in effect does not imply a single activity but rather a unity of the two *energeiai*.[13] To him, the Dionysian formula means that the *energeiai* become known in and through each other.[14]

The dyoenergists developed a range of classifications for both divine and human *energeiai* that varied from a simple enumeration of divine and human actions to more complicated sets of subclasses within these two groups. Thus Sophronius believed that the human *energeiai* of Christ can be divided into two categories. The first contains those human activities proceeding from human nature; they are active *energeiai*. Among them Sophronius enumerates birth "according to the flesh"; breastfeeding; physical growth; maturation (or passing from one age to another); and such experiences as hunger, thirst, and tiredness. Another category comprises those human *energeiai* accepted by Christ as a human being. These in their turn may be grouped into two subcategories. The first subcategory contains actions performed by Christ as both their subject and object (middle *energeiai*, similar to the middle voice in ancient Greek verbs). Sophronius enumerated among them sitting, sleeping, and satisfying hunger and thirst. Another subcategory contains *energeiai* that Christ accepted from somebody or something else (passive *energeiai*), as for example being conceived in the incorruptible womb of the Virgin; reclining in it; being carried by His human parents and embraced by His mother; and feeling pain from the blows of the Roman soldiers, the flagellation afterwards, and finally the crucifixion. Last, Sophronius considered the very fact that Christ had a visible body as a kind of suffering or passive *energeia*. Christ was limited by the form of the human body; this was also a sort of passive *energeia*.[15]

Along with His human activities, whether they proceeded from His human nature or were accepted by it from the outside, Christ performed actions that proceeded from His divine nature. Among them Sophronius enumerated His conception without semen; John the Baptist's leaping in the womb of Elizabeth; Christ's incorruptible birth (in which the divine activity was directed toward the Virgin); the preservation of Mary's virginity before, during, and after the birth; the revelation given to the shepherds on Christmas night; the star's guidance of

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[12] $ACO_2$ I $148^{29}$-$149^{32}$.

[13] *Ambiguorum liber* 5, PG 91, 1056A-1060C.

[14] *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, 8, PG 91, 100D.

[15] $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $448^{20}$-$450^{8}$.

the Magi; their bringing gifts and worship to the Child; Christ's acquisition of knowledge without formal education; the transformation of water into wine at the wedding in Cana; healing of the ill, blind, lame, paralysed, and leprous; filling the hungry; embittering the persecutors; taming the wind and sea; walking on the sea; exorcising evil spirits; the earthquake, solar eclipse, and opening of the tombs at the moment of Christ's death; His Resurrection after three days, abolition of corruption and death, and leaving the tomb with the stone and seals untouched; His coming through the closed doors of the disciples' meeting room to convince Thomas of His resurrection; and His ascension into heaven.[16] Unlike with the human *energeiai*, God is not a passive object of Christ's activities, but always an active subject for them.

Although the dyoenergists made a clear distinction between the human and divine activities of Christ, they considered them to constitute a certain unity. To them, this unity is of the same character as the unity of the two natures. The unity of the activities could therefore be expressed in Chalcedonian terms: inseparable, immutable, indivisible, and unconfused. The natural *energeiai* of Christ, owing to their indissoluble unity, have a communication that had been ascribed primarily to the natural properties in previous Christological tradition. By analogy with the *communicatio idiomatum*, this communication can be called a *communicatio operationum*. Pope Martin at the Lateran council described this phenomenon as follows: whenever Christ acted, He did so both as a human being and as God. All His divine activities were performed with the participation of the human nature and *vice versa*. In particular, in the miracles, which are divine *energeiai*, the human nature was involved together with the divine nature. In addition, the divine nature accepted the physical suffering in unity with the human nature.[17]

As has already been mentioned, the later phase of the controversy shifted the focus of debate from the issue of Christ's action to the issue of His will. The notion of will was hardly elaborated before the beginning of the seventh century. It was practically absent from ancient philosophical systems and was only slightly touched on by earlier Christian writers, who attached the concept of will (θέλησις, θέλημα) primarily to God in the sense of His commandments and desire to save humankind. Humans were also considered to be endowed with will. Thus for Irenaeus of Lyon, will is a free force of the human soul.[18] For Didymus, will preceedes any human action.[19] A deeper insight into the notion of will was achieved in the context of the Arian controversy. The Cappadocians, for instance, attributed will to the common nature of the Holy Trinity and ranked it together with such aspects of the nature as activity, strength, force and purpose.

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[16] $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $452^{12}$-$454^8$.

[17] $ACO_2$ I $148^{32}$-$151^5$; $ACO_2$ I $149^{32}$-$151^5$.

[18] *Fragmenta varia graeca* (CPG 1315), in W. W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei episcopi Lugdunensis libri quinque adversus haereses*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1857), 5.65.

[19] *Fragmenta in epistulam ad Romanos* (*in catenis*) (CPG 2558), in K. Staab, *Pauluskommentar aus der griechischen Kirche aus Katenenhandschriftengesammelt* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1933), 5.10-12.

To them, will is a movement (κίνησις)[20] or deliberate movement (αὐτεξούσιος κίνησις).[21] So it was also for Augustine, whose statement "will is (...) the movement of the soul" was mentioned once in the *Report* of Pope Agatho and twice during the sessions of Constantinople III in 680-681.[22]

These and other definitions were referred to during the controversy and developed further by Maximus the Confessor, who set out nine definitions of will and made some basic distinctions related to the issue. First, he distinguished between the will as a faculty of nature and the objects of volition. He called the former *thelisis* or *thelima*, and the latter *theliton* or *thelithen*. Maximus illustrated this distinction by the example of God and the Saints, who share the same object of will, namely the salvation of the world. Their wills are not identical, however; the difference is that the divine will is by its nature saving, whereas human wills are by their nature saved. Another distinction introduced by Maximus was between common and particular will, denoted by the expressions "to will simply" and "how to will".[23]

A favourite monothelite expression for the human nature of Christ was "flesh endowed with soul" (ἐψυχωμένη σάρξ). Monothelites preferred this expression because it appears to exclude will from Christ's human nature. Indeed, they deprived Christ's human soul of will, which in their belief was replaced by the divine will. The monothelites believed that Christ had a single will that was entirely divine and lacked any human element. They did not consider the will as a mixture or composite, as they did in the case of the single *energeia*. They never called Christ's will *theandric*. For them, His will remained plain and unmixed. The divine will enriched the human nature of Christ with what the latter was lacking, namely its own will.

Because the human nature of Christ lacked its own will, it was led and controlled by the divine will or "gesture" (νεῦμα). To the monothelites, the very fact that the human nature was led by divine commands excluded any possible conflict between the humanity and the Godhead in Christ. If there were a genuinely human will, however, such a conflict would be inevitable. This proposition was the most popular argument in support of the single will; it can be found in almost every monothelite text from the *Ekthesis* onwards. According to the monothelites, the human will would conflict with the divine one because of its liability to sin and corruption. They usually referred to the human will as "fleshly".

The dyothelites agreed with the monothelites that a corrupted human nature, together with its will and *energeia*, would be contrary to the divine one. In Christ, however, neither His human nature nor its will and *energeia* were corrupted. It was Maximus the Confessor who offered a convincing explanation for this lack of corruption. For him, no human volitional impulse and action,

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[20] Gregorius of Nyssa, *Ad Ablabium quod non sint tres dei* (CPG 3139), in F. Müller, *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vol. 3.1 (Leiden: Brill, 1958), 3,1.48.20-49.7.

[21] Gregorius of Nyssa, *In Ecclesiasten* (CPG 3157), in P. Alexander, *Gregorii Nysseni opera*, vol. 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 5.407.11.

[22] *Adversus Julianum Pelagianistam*, PL 45, 1475; $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $79^{2-6}$; $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $248^{1-2}$; $ACO_2$ $II^1$ $350^{1-4}$.

[23] *Disputatio cum Pyrrho*, PG 91, 292B-293A.

provided that it finds itself in accordance with nature (κατὰ φύσιν) and is not impelled by sin, can be opposed to the will of God. Only what is contrary to nature (παρὰ φύσιν) actually opposes the will of God. Christ, who as a human being willed and acted in accordance with nature, could not have any internal opposition of wills.[24]

It is not Christ's will but ours that is corrupted by sin and as a result comes into conflict with the divine will. In order for human will to be healed, it had to be adopted by Christ. Thus the dyothelites placed the issue of human will in a soteriological context and used it as an argument in support of the existence of two wills in Christ. They applied the principle initially articulated by Gregory of Nazianzus in his letter to Cledonius, to the human will: "That which is not assumed is not healed, and that is saved, which is united with God".[25] Thus if human will were not assumed through the Incarnation, it would fall away from salvation. Consequently, the salvation of human nature in its entirety cannot be completed and becomes an illusion, as Maximus warned. As a result, the entire mystery of the Incarnation loses its meaning. Moreover, according to Maximus, the will is a human faculty that must be saved in the first place, because it was through the will that sin penetrated human nature, when Adam first desired and then ate the forbidden fruit. Therefore, if Christ did not assume Adam's will, humans remain under the power of sin:

> If Adam ate willingly, then the will is the first thing in us that became subject to passion. And since the will is the first thing in us that became subject to passion, if, according to them (i.e. the Monothelites), the Logos did not assume it along with the nature when He became incarnate, I have not become free from sin. And if I have not become free from sin, I was not saved, since whatever is not assumed is not saved.[26]

The dyothelites emphasized not only the salvific aspect of Christ's assumption of human will but also its deification (θέωσις). This issue emerged from discussions of a quotation from Gregory of Nazianzus' treatise *About the Son*:

> Let them quote in the seventh place that the Son came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. Well, if this had not been said by Himself Who came down, we should say that the phrase was modelled as issuing from the human nature, not from Him Who is conceived of in His character as the Savior, for His willing cannot be opposed to God, seeing it has altogether become divine; but conceived of simply as in our nature, inasmuch as the human will does not completely follow the divine, but for the most part struggles against and resists it. For we understand in the same way the words, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless let not what I will but Thy will prevail. For it is not likely that He did not know whether it was possible or not, or that He would oppose will to will. But since, as this is the language of Him Who assumed our nature (for He it was Who came down), and not of the nature which He assumed, we must meet the objection in this way, that the passage does not mean that the Son has a special will of His own besides that of the Father, but that He has not; so that the meaning would be, "not to do Mine own

[24] *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, 20, PG 91, 236AB.

[25] *Epistulae Theologicae*, P. Gallay, *Grégoire de Nazianze. Lettres théologiques*, Sources chrétiennes 208 (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1974), 101.32[2-3].

[26] *Disputatio cum Pyrrho*, PG 91, 325A

will, for there is none of Mine apart from but that which is common to Me and Thee; for as We have one Godhead, so We have one will.[27]

The crucial phrase here is "for His willing cannot be opposed to God, seeing it has altogether become divine." The monothelites understood the phrase to denote the single divine will of Christ. For the dyothelites, however, this phrase was a testimony about two wills: one divine and another human, which was deified (θεωθέν).

The dyothelites contested the monothelite model of the humanity of Christ lacking its own will and as a result being moved by the divine will. At the same time, the general model of human nature as being moved by the divine will could be acceptable to them. Thus Maximus the Confessor in his *Ambigua* used the analogy of a body being ruled by the soul in order to illustrate Christ's humanity being moved by His divinity.[28] The dyothelites in general, and Maximus in particular, understood this model in a different way from the Monothelites. The fact that the humanity of Christ was moved by His divinity does not deprive the former of its own will but implies that the human will was completely subservient to the divine one.

At some stage in the polemics the monothelites suggested that they would admit two natural wills in Christ on the condition that these wills were defined as controlled by a single "gnomic" will (γνωμικὸν θέλημα), connected to the *hypostasis* and free choice of Christ. This assumption, however, met opposition from Maximus the Confessor, who developed his own concept of the gnomic will. To him, this will cannot be the source of any other will, because no one will can be derived from another will. A gnomic will would turn Christ into an ordinary person vulnerable to errors, because the gnomic will in humans is usually a result of ignorance and doubts. Gnomic will as a function of selecting or choosing is by definition imperfect. Therefore it cannot be ascribed to Christ, who unlike other humans had no need to choose between good and bad because His natural will was always directed to the good. He did not hesitate or doubt but always knew, willed, and did what is ultimately good.[29]

To summarise, the whole dispute was about the number of wills and activities that Christ had, as well as about their attribution either to the *hypostasis* or to the natures of Christ. These issues were articulated in the categories of Aristotelian dialectics, such as nature, property, mind, action, and the like. At that time, no compromise formulas that would reconcile the monoenergist-monothelite approach on the one hand, and the dyoenergist-dyothelite approach on the other, was invented. Without such formulas or at least theological hermeneutics that would bridge the existing ones, a full rapprochement between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox traditions seems to be problematic. This paper cannot solve this problem or suggest such formulas, but leaves this task and responsibility to the members of the theological Dialogue.

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[27] De Filio, J. Barbel, *Gregor von Nazianz. Die fünf theologischen Reden* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1963), $12^{1-18}$ (or. 30).

[28] See *Ambiguorum liber*, PG 91, 1049D; 1056A.

[29] See G. Florovsky, *Vizantijskije Otsy V-VIII vekov* (Paris, 1933), 215 (in Russian).

# Orthodoxy and Heresy of the Anti-Chalcedonians According to St. John Damascene (676-749)

*Georgios D. Martzelos*

*Introduction*

The progress of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the non-Chalcedonian Churches of the Orient, although it has raised the keen interest and admiration even of Western theologians,[1] nonetheless has caused an intense climate of reactions on the part of certain Orthodox.[2] This has resulted in some of them not seriously taking into account and misinterpreting even St. John Damascene's sober dogmatic valuation of the anti-Chalcedonians, or non-Chalcedonians or Oriental Orthodox, as they are called nowadays, which is made in his work *De Haeresibus*.[3] In fact in this work, the great and precise dogmatologist of the Orthodox Church, aiming at examining the different heresies and making them known, does not also fail to mention among others the anti-Chalcedonians, describing in a clear and indisputable way their dogmatic

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[1] See characteristically A. M. Ritter, "Der gewonnene christologische Konsens zwischen orthodoxen Kirchen im Licht der Kirchenvätertradition," in *Logos. Festschrift für Luise Abramowski*, herausgegeben von Hanns Christof Brennecke, Ernst Ludwig Grasmück, Christoph Markschies (Berlin and New York: Walter der Gruyter, 1993), 469ff; D. W. Winkler, *Koptische Kirche und Reichskirche, Altes Schisma und neuer Dialog* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia-Verlag, 1977), 222ff. 332f; D.Wendebourg, "Chalkedon in der ökumenischen Diskussion," in *Chalkedon: Geschichte und Aktualität. Studien zur Rezeption der christologischen Formel von Chalkedon*, herausgegeben von J. van Oort und J. Roldanus (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 193f.; 208ff.

[2] See relatively Theodoros Zissis, *Ἡ "Ὀρθοδοξία" τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων Μονοφυσιτῶν* (Thessaloniki: Vryennios, 1994) (in Greek); Idem, *Τὰ ὅρια τῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Οἰκουμενισμὸς καὶ Παπισμὸς* (Thessaloniki 2004), 104-125 (in Greek); Holy Monastery St. Gregoriou, *Εἶναι οἱ Ἀντιχαλκηδόνιοι Ὀρθόδοξοι; Κείμενα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Κοινότητος τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους καὶ ἄλλων ἁγιορειτῶν Πατέρων περὶ τοῦ διαλόγου Ὀρθοδόξων καὶ Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων (Μονοφυσιτῶν)* (Holy Mountain 1995) (in Greek); Holy Community of the Holy Mountain Athos, *Παρατηρήσεις περὶ τοῦ Θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου Ὀρθοδόξων καὶ Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων (Ἀπάντησις εἰς κριτικὴν τοῦ Σεβ. Μητροπολίτου Ἑλβετίας κ. Δαμασκηνοῦ)*, Holy Mountain 1996 (in Greek); Stavros N. Bozovitis, *Τὰ αἰώνια σύνορα τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας καὶ οἱ Ἀντιχαλκηδόνιοι* (Athens: "Ο Σωτήρ" Publications, 1999) (in Greek); A. N. Papavassiliou, *Ὁ Θεολογικὸς Διάλογος μεταξὺ Ὀρθοδόξων καὶ Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων*, Vol. I (Nicosia: Studies Centre of the Holy Monastery Kykkou, 2000) (in Greek); J.-C. Larchet, *Personne et nature. La Trinité – Le Christ – L'homme. Contributions aux dialogues interorthodoxes et interchrétiens contemporains* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2011), 65-158.

[3] See for example Zissis, *Ἡ "Ὀρθοδοξία' τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων Μονοφυσιτῶν*, 18ff; Idem, *Τὰ ὅρια τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, 115ff; Holy Community of the Holy Mountain Athos, *Παρατηρήσεις*, 71; J.- C. Larchet, *Personne et nature*, 124ff. See also D. Tselegides, "Επιστημονικὴ κριτικὴ μιᾶς διδακτορικῆς διατριβῆς," *Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμᾶς* 85, 792 (2002): 311; Archmandrite Georgios, Abbot of the Holy Monastery St. Gregoriou, *Ἡ "ἰδεολογική" ὀρθοδοξία τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων. Ἀπάντησις σὲ ἀπόψεις τοῦ καθηγητοῦ Γεωργίου Μαρτζέλου* (Holy Mountain (Athos): Edition of the Holy Monastery St. Gregoriou, 2005) (in Greek), 22ff.

identity. Although he detects their heretical character, which is constituted in their secession from the Orthodox Church due to their refusal to accept the Definition of Chalcedon and, more generally, the decisions of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, he does not hesitate to recognize their Orthodoxy in all other matters pointing out the following: "Egyptians or Schematics (in other manuscripts Schismatics) and Monophysites; are those who on the pretence of the Chalcedonian dogma seceded from the Orthodox Church. They are also called Egyptians, because the Egyptians first started this schema (in other manuscripts schism) at the times of the emperors Marcian and Valentinian, and they are orthodox in everything else. These, sympathizing Dioscorus of Alexandria who had been condemned at the Council of Chalcedon as a counsel of Eutyches' teaching, became averse to the Council and as far as it was up to them they caused thousands of accusations against it... proving that they are perverse and empty-minded" ("Αἰγύπτιοι, οἱ καὶ Σχηματικοὶ [in other manuscripts Σχισματικοί], καὶ Μονοφυσῖται· οἱ προφάσει τοῦ ἐν Χαλκηδόνι συντάγματος τοῦ τόπου ἀποσχίσαντες τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας. Αἰγυπτιακοὶ δὲ προσείρηνται, διὰ τὸ πρώτους Αἰγυπτίους κατάρξασθαι τούτου τοῦ σχήματος [in other manuscripts σχίσματος] ἐπὶ Μαρκιανοῦ καὶ Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ τῶν βασιλέων· τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα ὀρθόδοξοι ὑπάρχοντες. Οὗτοι δὲ προσπαθείᾳ τῇ πρὸς τὸν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ Διόσκορον, τὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν Χαλκηδόνι συνόδου καθαιρεθέντα, ὡς τὸν Εὐτυχοῦς δογμάτων συνήγορον, ἀντεπάθησαν τῇ συνόδῳ καὶ μυρίας τόγε ἐπ' αὐτοῖς μέμψεις κατ' αὐτῆς ἀνεπλάσαντο (...) σκαιοὺς αὐτοὺς καὶ ματαιόφρονας ἀποδείξαντες").[4] Let us, though, see in detail which is the dogmatic identity of the anti-Chalcedonians, on the basis of St. John Damascene's description and evaluation of this heresy.

*1. The Dogmatic Identity of the Anti-Chalcedonians*

Certain Orthodox theologians are of the opinion that the dogmatic identity of the anti-Chalcedonians according to St. John Damascene, is to be found in their Monophysite Christology. They hold that this is already manifested by their characterization by Damascene as "Monophysites" in the above passage from his work *De Haeresibus*.[5] We should stress from the beginning, though, that the opinion of these theologians is completely erroneous because the characterization "Monophysites" is not used in the above passage to state the dogmatic identity of Dioscorus and his followers; it is simply one of the various names which were given to them by their Orthodox rivals and by which they were known in Damascene's time. As the characterizations "Egyptians" and "Schematics" were attributed to them according to Damascene "because the Egyptians first started this schema (schism) at the times of the emperors Marcian and Valentinian",[6] in the same way the characterization "Monophysites" was attributed to them by the

[4] See PG 94, 741A.

[5] See Zissis, *Ἡ "Ορθοδοξία"*, 19f; Idem, *Τὰ ὅρια τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, 117; Holy Community of the Holy Mountain Athos, *Παρατηρήσεις*, 71; Tselegides, "Ἐπιστημονικὴ κριτικὴ", 311; Georgios, Abbot of the Holy Monastery St. Gregoriou, *Ἡ "ἰδεολογικὴ" ὀρθοδοξία τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων*, 22ff.

[6] See PG 94, 741A.

Orthodox because they had apparently turned down the Chalcedonian Definition and had exclusively accepted only the Cyrillian formula "One nature of God the Word incarnate" ("Μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη"), and certainly not because they approved of Eutyches' Monophysite Christology, which they also had condemned together with Eutyches himself already from the setting up of the anti-Chalcedonian schism.[7] Anyhow, we should take into account that Damascene in his work *De Haeresibus*, displaying the various heresies, first mentions the names with which they were known and then goes on to the exposition of their teaching and their evaluation. Accordingly, the dogmatic identity of the anti-Chalcedonian adherents of Dioscorus in Damascene's above cited passage, is not stated with the characterisation "Monophysites" but with that which Damascene later points out. Namely, that due to the Chalcedonian Definition they seceded from the Orthodox Church, but they remained Orthodox in everything else ("on the pretence of the Chalcedonian dogma seceded from the Orthodox Church(...) and they are orthodox in everything else"). We should also underline the fact that Damascene is obliged to stress this point so as to differentiate Dioscorus and his followers from the anti-Chalcedonian followers of Eutyches, the so-called Eutychianists, who were real Monophysites.[8]

Besides, the fact that Damascene characterises Dioscorus as "a counsel of Eutyches' teaching" does not mean that he accepts a dogmatic identification between Dioscorus and Eutyches, in which case he would have included Dioscorus and his followers in the heresy of the Eutychianists and would not have differentiated them. This characterization is simply related only to Dioscorus' deeds during the "Robber Synod" (449), where with his advocacy in favour of Eutyches he had actually contributed decisively to the acquittal of the condemned by the "Standing Synod" (Ἐνδημοῦσα Σύνοδος) (448) Monophysite heresy leader. Damascene though, certainly knew that Dioscorus and his followers had specifically and categorically condemned Eutyches in retrospect. Moreover, that is why apart from their secession from the Orthodox Church due to their refusal to accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council which constitutes the essence of their heresy, he regards them as Orthodox in everything else that is in their teaching. This is exactly the reason why in his work *Contra Jacobitas* he regards these anti-Chalcedonians as agreeing with the essence of the Christological teaching of the previous Fathers of the Church, underlining those Christological elements which differentiate them from Eutyches.[9]

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[7] See specifically *Le Livre de Synaxaire*, Patrologia Orientalis 9, 372ff., as well as the *Letter* of Dioscorus *To Secundinus*, R. Y. Ebied and L. R. Wickham, "A Collection of unpublished Letters of Timothy Aelurus," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1970): 337-360.

[8] See characteristically PG 94, 740A-744B.

[9] See *Τόμος, ὡς ἐκ προσώπου Πέτρου τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου ἐπισκόπου Δαμασκοῦ, Πρὸς τὸν ἐπίσκοπον δῆθεν τοῦ Δαραίας τὸν Ἰακωβίτην* 14, PG 94, 1444 BCD: "Ὁμολόγηται τοίνοιν παρ' ἅπασι τοῖς ἁγίοις Πατράσιν ἐκ θεότητος καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος γεγενῆσθαι τὴν ἕνωσιν, καὶ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν θεότητι τέλειον, καὶ τέλειον καὶ ἀνελλιπῆ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι. Εἴπατε τοίνυν ἡμῖν· καὶ ὑμῖν ταῦτα δοκεῖ; Συνομολογήσετε, ὡς γέ μοι δοκεῖ (...) Εἰ γὰρ ἐκ θεότητος καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος τὸν Χριστὸν λέγοντες, ἐκ δύο φύσεων αὐτὸν ὁμολογεῖτε, καὶ ἴσον παρ' ὑμῖν δύναται τὸ ἐκ θεότητος καὶ ἀνθρωπότητος τῷ ἐκ δύο φύσεων, πῶς θεότητα καὶ ἀνθρωπότητα τὸν Χριστὸν λέγοντες καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν, καὶ ἐν θεότητι καὶ ἀνθρωπότητι, οὐ δύο φύσεις αὐτὸν καὶ ἐν δυσὶν ὁμολογήσετε φύσεσι;". See relatively also A. Louth, *St John Damascene. Tradition and Originality in Byzantine*

This is the correct evaluation of the dogmatic identity of the anti-Chalcedonians according to St. John Damascene. Exactly the same view is also represented by two distinguished Greek dogmatologists of accredited Orthodox conviction and international scientific prestige, the memorable professors John Karmiris and Rev. John Romanides.

Specifically, John Karmiris in his paper during the theological meeting of Orthodox and anti-Chalcedonians in Aarhus, Denmark (1964) underlined the following: "The classical dogmatician of the Orthodox Church, John of Damascus, successfully expressed Orthodoxy's positive attitude towards the non-Chalcedonian Christians of the Orient when he said that he considered them, 'on the basis of the Constitution of Chalcedon, to be separated from the [Orthodox] Church (...) while being Orthodox in all other things'. Because of this situation, it is necessary that on both sides intensive efforts be made towards the reunion of the non-Chalcedonian churches with the Orthodox Church". [10] In the discussion that took place after his presentation, he made the following important statement, having previously studied, as he himself stressed, not only the works of the Fathers of the Church but also those of the leaders of the non-Chalcedonians: "I have come to the conclusion that there is no real difference between the Orthodox and the non-Chalcedonians as far as the essence of the Christological dogma is concerned, as all of them accept the teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria. There is a difference only regarding the terminology and formulation of this dogma".[11] Analogous is the attitude of Rev. John Romanides who, regarding the anti-Chalcedonian followers of Dioscorus as Orthodox concerning the essence of their Christological teaching, speaks persistently of

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*Theology* (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 161. As is known, Eutyches denied confessing Christ "out of two natures" ("ἐκ δύο φύσεων"). He said "Μὴ γένοιτο ἐμὲ εἰπεῖν ἐκ δύο φύσεων τὸν Χριστόν ἢ φυσιολογεῖν τὸν Θεόν μου" (See ACO II,1,1,136). He only confessed "ἐκ δύο φύσεων γεγενῆσθαι τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν πρὸ τῆς ἑνώσεως" (See ACO II,1,1,143) and union "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" (See ACO II,1,1,140) so that he would have space to confess one nature after the union. For Eutyches, confessing Christ "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" meant accepting two natures after the incarnation (See on this matter Georgios D. Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγές τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας. Συμβολὴ στὴν ἱστορικοδογματικὴ διερεύνηση τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Δ΄ Οἰκουμενικῆς Συνόδου* (Pournaras: Thessaloniki, 1986), 129ff. (in Greek), which constituted a basic difference against the anti-Chalcedonian followers of Dioscorus. And Damascene knew this very well during his dogmatic evaluation of the Anti-Chalcedonians, as it comes out of the above-cited texts. See also Georgios D. Martzelos, "*Ἡ 'Ορθοδοξία' τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων κατὰ τὸν ἅγ. Ἰωάννη τὸν Δαμασκηνὸ καὶ ὁ ἐνδοορθόδοξος διάλογος* (Ὀφειλόμενη ἀπάντηση σὲ βασικὲς θέσεις τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Ἀρχιμανδρίτου Γεωργίου, Καθηγουμένου τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Ὁσίου Γρηγορίου, *Ἡ "ἰδεολογική" ὀρθοδοξία τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων. Ἀπάντησις σὲ ἀπόψεις τοῦ καθηγητοῦ Γεωργίου Μαρτζέλου*, ἐκδ. Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Ὁσίου Γρηγορίου, Ἅγιον Ὄρος 2005, 89)," *Θεολογία* 77/1 (2006): 246ff. (in Greek).

[10] See John N. Karmiris, "The Problem of the Unification of the non-Chalcedonian Churches of the East with the Orthodox on the basis of Cyril's formula: 'Mia *physis* tou Theou Logou sesarkomene,'" *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10 (1965): 62. See also, *Does Chalcedon divide or unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology*, eds. P. Gregorios, W. H. Lazareth and N. A. Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), 30f.

[11] See "Discussion: Concerning the paper of Professor Karmiris" *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10 (1965): 75. See also Gregorios, H. Lazareth and A. Nissiotis, *Does Chalcedon divide or unite?*, 43. Martzelos, *Ἡ 'Ορθοδοξία' τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων κατὰ τὸν ἅγ. Ἰωάννη τὸν Δαμασκηνὸ καὶ ὁ ἐνδοορθόδοξος διάλογος*, 255f.

"Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodox",[12] making it clear that the only substantial theological difference between the "Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodox" is the acceptance of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that St. John Damascene in his *Expositio Accurata Fidei Orthodoxae* gives the impression that he regards them as heretics also due to their Christology where he writes "not by confusion or mixture or blending as said the pursued by God Dioscorus (...) and Severus and their polluted faction" ("οὐ κατὰ φυρμὸν ἢ σύγχυσιν ἢ ἀνάκρασιν, ὡς ὁ θεήλατος ἔφη Διόσκορος (...) καὶ Σεβῆρος, καὶ ἡ τούτων ἐναγὴς συμμορία").[13]

Firstly, we should stress that, as has come out of the thorough and in-depth study of the works of the above two anti-Chalcedonian leaders, these characterisations are not connected to their actual Christology, which is proven to have no essential difference to the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria.[14] They are connected to the fact that Dioscorus and Severus refused to accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council, thus becoming leaders and founders of the anti-Chalcedonian schism. According to Damascene and the other Fathers this is exactly what constitutes the essence of their heresy, not their actual Christology. Given that they had turned down the Fourth Ecumenical Council as Nestorian, in this way tearing themselves apart from the body of the Church, the Fathers were not at all concerned whether their Christology was in itself Orthodox or heretical. And this is because generally for the Fathers of the Church the criterion of orthodoxy is not simply ideological but also ecclesiological. It is connected to the acceptance of the Ecumenical Councils and therefore has ecclesiological dimensions. It is characteristic for instance, that whereas Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa had insulted St. Cyril of Alexandria by their deeds and writings and had supported Nestorius and his teaching—for which they could have very easily been characterised as heretics—nevertheless, because they had accepted the ecumenical decision of the Church and had condemned Nestorius, they were regarded as Orthodox by the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council without having renounced their Nestorian-like positions. And this is why later the Fifth Ecumenical Council, which was concerned especially with their Christology, condemned their Nestorian-like and anti-Cyrillian writings, although the Fourth Ecumenical had already restored them as Orthodox (condemnation of the "Three Chapters").[15] This fact indisputably shows that the criterion of Orthodoxy for the Church is not only whether someone phrases a dogmatic teaching correctly or incorrectly. It is basically whether or not someone accepts the related ecumenical decision of the Church. Therefore, in this sense it was enough for the Fathers that the leaders of the

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[12] See John S. Romanides, "St. Cyril's 'One *physis* or hypostasis of God the Logos incarnate' and Chalcedon," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 10 (1965): 82f.

[13] See PG 94, 993A.

[14] See on this matter the above statement of Professor J. Karmiris, as well as the two doctoral theses on this subject, Ilias Kesmiris, *Ἡ Χριστολογία καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ πολιτικὴ τοῦ Διοσκόρου Ἀλεξανδρείας* (Thessaloniki, 2000) and John Th. Nikolopoulos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Σεβήρου Ἀντιοχείας καὶ ὁ Ὅρος τῆς Χαλκηδόνας* (Thessaloniki, 2002) both in Greek.

[15] See Vasileios K. Stefanides, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία* (Athens: Aster, $^{3}$1970), 239; Vl. Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία Ι* (Athens, 1992), 708ff. (in Greek).

anti-Chalcedonians and their followers had turned down the Fourth Ecumenical Council, so as to reproach them as heretics. They needed nothing more to convince them about the heretical character of the anti-Chalcedonians.

Besides, it is scientifically unacceptable to interpret the various characterisations given by the Fathers of the Church to the anti-Chalcedonians from a one-sided view and independently from the irrefutable historical and theological facts found in the proceedings and even in their writings.

Moreover, as is known, Dioscorus of Alexandria who was the instigator of the anti-Chalcedonian schism was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council not for dogmatic reasons, but only for canonical reasons. This becomes apparent not only from the third session of the Council during which Dioscorus' condemnation took place,[16] but also through what Anatolius of Constantinople stated categorically and explicitly during the fifth session of the Council, so as to preserve the phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" ("out of two natures") in the text of the initial Definition, which the imperial representatives, instigated by the papal legates, regarded as Monophysite-like connecting it to the person of Dioscorus. He stressed that "Dioscorus was not deposed because of his faith, but because he made himself excommunicated from the archbishop Leo and was called three times and did not come; that is why he was deposed" ("Διὰ [τὴν] πίστιν οὐ καθῃρέθη Διόσκορος, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἀκοινωνησίαν ἐποίησε τῷ κυρίῳ Λέοντι τῷ ἀρχιεπισκόπῳ καὶ τρίτον ἐκλήθη καὶ οὐκ ἦλθεν, διὰ τοῦτο καθῃρέθη").[17] If Dioscorus had been condemned as a heretic for dogmatic reasons,[18] we

[16] See ACO II,1,2,8[204]-29[225].

[17] See ACO II,1,2,124[320].

[18] The view that Dioscorus was condemned during the Fourth Ecumenical Council not only for canonical but also for dogmatic reasons is represented with no serious argumental basis by professor D. Tselegides. He supports this view, on the one hand on isolated "proclamations" ("ἐκβοήσεις") of certain Fathers of Chalcedon who anathematised Dioscorus together with Nestorius and Eutyches, and on the other hand on the document (libellus) of Eusebius of Doryleum, who, accusing Dioscorus in Chalcedon of his misdeeds during the "Robber Council" (449), characterised him as "ὁμόδοξο (...) καὶ ὁμόφρονα τοῦ Εὐτυχοῦς (...) καὶ αἱρετικό" (See loc. cit., 309). This view though, apart from the above facts which prove the opposite, is completely mistaken also for the reason that the isolated proclamations of certain Fathers which were heard in the Council, as well as the characterisations of Eusebius of Doryleum against Dioscorus do not constitute a decision of the Council related to the heretical character of Dioscorus' Christology. Besides it is clear that the isolated proclamations or accusations of certain Fathers in a local or an Ecumenical Council do not constitute a synodical decision, therefore they do not express the universality of the church conscience. For example, John of Germanicea and the papal legates, who during the fifth session of the Council had asked for a change of the initial Definition, were characterised as "Nestorians" by many of the Fathers of the Council (See ACO II,1,2,123[319]f.; 125[321]). That though, does not mean that those Fathers, who contributed decisively with their insistence on the modification of the initial Definition and the formation of the final Definition, were regarded as heretics and Nestorians nor that they were condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council as such. Not by all means! Accordingly, it is scientifically impermissible to follow to the letter and take a jaundiced view of the isolated proclamations or accusations of certain Fathers in an Ecumenical Council or even more to attribute to them universal weight if there has not previously been a related decision of the Council. Only the Council expresses on this matter the universality of the Church conscience. Independently from this fact though, we should note that there is no specialist researcher in international bibliography who adopts this view that Dioscorus was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council not only for canonical but also for dogmatic reasons. On the contrary, distinguished orthodox theologians and historians support exactly the opposite. Rev. G. Florovsky has emphatically stressed that the reason

understand that St. Anatolius would not have opposed such an argument against the imperial legates, because this argument would have had no proving cogency for the orthodoxy of the phrase "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" ("out of two natures") which Dioscorus had actually used and was included in the initial Definition.[19] As Rev. John Romanides supported in relation to John Karmiris' paper in Aarhus, Denmark (1964), "(...) Dioscorus was considered quite Orthodox in his faith by such leading Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon, as those represented by Anatolius of Constantinople".[20]

Nevertheless, independently from this fact we should stress that not even one passage from Dioscorus or Severus exists where it appears that they accept any blending or confusion of the two natures, as they are accused of by Damascene. On the contrary, there are many points where Dioscorus and Severus verbatim reject the blending, the confusion and the blurring of the two natures. Already in the Fourth Ecumenical Council Dioscorus had stated emphatically "We say neither confusion nor division nor change. Accursed be the one who says either confusion or change or mixture" (Οὔτε σύγχυσιν λέγομεν οὔτε τομὴν οὔτε τροπήν. Ἀνάθεμα τῷ λέγοντι ἢ σύγχυσιν ἢ τροπὴν ἢ ἀνάκρασιν).[21] Besides, Severus time after time clearly and categorically condemns the confusing and the change of the two natures, emphatically highlighting the unconfused and the unchangeable of the two natures in Christ after the union.[22] Consequently, it is scientifically unacceptable to be one-sidedly

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for which the Fathers of Chalcedon did not condemn Dioscorus for heresy was that Dioscorus did not deny the "double consubstantiality" (διπλὴ ὁμοουσιότητα) of God-man as Eutyches had done in the "Standing Synod" (Ἐνδημοῦσα Σύνοδος) of 448. (See Georges Florovsky, *The Byzantine Fathers of the Fifth Century*, in Georges Florovsky *The Collected Works*, vol. 8 (Büchervertriebsanstalt: Vaduz/ Belmont Mass 1987), 327). Also John Romanides, in his presentation of a special study in Aarhus Denmark 1964, supported and substantiated the view that Dioscorus was not condemned as a heretic during the Fourth Ecumenical Council because the "Robber Synod" (449), at which he presided, was not regarded by the Fathers as heretical, as the restoration of Eutyches was apparently based on his confession that Christ is "of the same substance as his mother" ("ὁμοούσιος τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ") (See Romanides, "St. Cyril's 'One *physis* or hypostasis of God the Logos incarnate", 97f.). See also Phidas, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἱστορία I*, 646, and also Martzelos, "'Η ἐπιστημονικότητα μιᾶς 'ἐπιστημονικῆς κριτικῆς'", 598ff.

[19] For more on this matter see Martzelos, *Γένεση καὶ πηγές τοῦ Ὅρου τῆς Χαλκηδόνας*, 70f., 129f.

[20] See "Discussion: Concerning the paper of Professor Karmiris," 77. See also, *Does Chalcedon divide or unite?*, 45.

[21] See ACO II,1,1,112. See also what he mentions about the double consubstantiality of the incarnate Word in his "*Letter to Secundinus"* (in R. Y. Ebied and L. R. Wickham, "A collection of unpublished Letters of Timothy Aelurus," *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1970): 337, 360).

[22] See indicatively the passages saved by Leontius Byzantius from Severus' letter *Πρὸς Σόλωνα (Κατὰ Μονοφυσιτῶν)*, PG 86, 1845D: "Τὰ ἐξ' ὧν ὁ Ἐμμανουὴλ ὑφεστήκει καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν οὐ τέτραπται, ὑφέστηκε δὲ ἐν τῇ ἑνώσει καὶ ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει θεωρούμενα") and from his second oration *Πρὸς Ἰωάννην τὸν Γραμματικὸν* (loc. cit., PG 86, 1848A: "Καὶ τῶν ἐξ' ὧν ἡ ἕνωσις μενόντων ἀμειώτων καὶ ἀναλλοιώτων, ἐν συνθέσει δὲ ὑφεστώτων, καὶ οὐκ ἐν μονάσιν ἰδιοσυστάτοις (...) Καὶ ὡς τὰ ἐξ' ὧν εἷς Χριστὸς ἐν τῇ συνθέσει, τελείως καὶ ἀμειώτως ὑφέστηκεν"), also the passage from Severus which has been saved by the monk Eustathius (*Ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Τιμόθεον Σχολαστικόν, περὶ δύο φύσεων κατὰ Σεβήρου*, PG 86, 912CD: "Τὸ γὰρ ἐκ δύο τινῶν συνενηνεγμένον, οὔτε τὰ ἐξ' ὧν συνετέθη συνέχεεν (...) Τῶν μὲν ἐξ' ὧν ἐστιν ὁ Χριστὸς μενόντων ἀμειώτων καὶ ἀναλλοιώτων, ἐν συνθέσει δὲ ὑφεστώτων"). Analytically on this matter see Nikolopoulos, *Ἡ Χριστολογία τοῦ Σεβήρου Ἀντιοχείας*, 89ff.; 93ff.; 249ff.

based on Damascene so as to be informed on the teaching of the anti-Chalcedonians, as do unfortunately certain theologians and researchers [23] completely erroneously and misleadingly, when we have the writings of the anti-Chalcedonians, where they themselves clarify what they do and do not accept. In other words, when we examine the teaching or the views of certain writers, whether they are heretics or Orthodox, it is extremely non-scientific to be solely based on others' views and not on the source texts of the writers themselves. Such a method could in no way constitute a scientific research. So in this case also we should firstly and mainly be based on the writings of Dioscorus and Severus themselves, so as to come to any conclusions concerning their teaching. When we discover that other views exist, like those of St. John Damascene or other Fathers, which are different or opposed to our conclusions, then we are obliged to explain the reason for this differentiation. Therefore, when examining the Christology of Dioscorus or Severus from a dogmatic point of view and in the light of Orthodox tradition, a researcher is obliged to answer the following question: Why does Damascene accuse Dioscorus and Severus of accepting the blending and the confusion of the two natures in Christ when they explicitly reject any blending and confusion? And the answer in this case is one and one only: Damascene at this point is not interested in scientifically analysing the Christological teaching of Dioscorus and Severus on the basis of their statements or their writings as does the science of theology today. For him the criterion for evaluating Dioscorus, Severus, and the rest of the anti-Chalcedonians is the fact that they do not accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council and its Definition, where the words *without confusion* and *unchangeably* are used to describe the union of the two natures in Christ. This precisely gives every right to Damascene to accuse them of denying the unconfused and unchangeable union of the two natures in Christ, thus accepting their blending and confusion, even though they themselves assert that they reject "confusion" and "change". It is an accusation though, which has come out of this particular way of understanding the facts on the basis of the above reasoning, and not on the basis of any research which Damascene might have conducted on the source texts of either Dioscorus or Severus or the rest of the anti-Chalcedonians. In any case, he was not interested in any research of this kind, because his purpose in this case was polemical and pastoral. He wanted to protect the Orthodox flock from the danger of the ones who repudiated the Fourth Ecumenical Council. He was not interested in this case whether their Christology was in itself heretical or Orthodox. For him as the anti-Chalcedonians had not accepted the Church's ecumenical decision during the Fourth Ecumenical Council, they were heretics.

Moreover, we should always keep in mind that the Fathers were pastors and as such were interested not so much in exact scientific analyses, but mainly and exclusively in safeguarding the orthodox flock against the danger of the heresies. For this reason, in their polemics against the various heresies, in many cases they did not express themselves with exact scientific accuracy as would be

[23] See for example Tselegides, "Επιστημονικὴ κριτική," 311; Larchet, *Personne et nature*, 126; Archmandrite Georgios, *Ἡ "ἰδεολογική" ὀρθοδοξία τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων*, 33. Against this position see also Martzelos, *Ἡ "Ὀρθοδοξία" τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων*, 249f.

demanded by modern scientific deontology, for example. What concerned them the most was basically the pastoral way to deal with the heresies and not approaching them exactly and scientifically if that did not promote their pastoral objectives. This ascertainment constitutes a basic principle which no theologian researcher should ignore during the study of patristic texts, so as to be drawn to the right conclusions. It is exceptionally characteristic that this basic principle is underlined already by St. Gregory Palamas, who cites St. Basil the Great for its consolidation. He notes, "Controversy about piety is a different thing to the confession of faith. And there is no need to be precise in language in the case of such controversy, as Basil the Great says. But in the case of confessing the faith, preciseness concerning everything is observed and is asked for" ("Ἕτερόν ἐστιν ἡ ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἀντιλογία καὶ ἕτερον ἡ τῆς πίστεως ὁμολογία, καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς ἀντιλογίας οὐκ ἀνάγκη περὶ τὰς λέξεις ἀκριβολογεῖσθαι τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα, ὡς καὶ ὁ Μέγας φησὶ Βασίλειος, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς ὁμολογίας ἀκρίβεια διὰ πάντων τηρεῖται καὶ ζητεῖται").[24] Thus it is a great methodological mistake to take literally, during the scientific quest for the truth, what the Fathers have said against the heretics, as if we were dealing with modern scientific approaches. The Fathers themselves make that perfectly clear in their disputes against the heretics that it is not necessary to have accuracy. Accuracy is adhered to and requested only in the confession of faith, namely during the formulation of the orthodox dogma. Of course this does not mean that the Fathers avoid making ascertainments some times, which one could say remind us of modern scientific analyses, as for example does St. John Damascene in his work *De Haeresibus*. Nevertheless, the Fathers should not be seen as modern theologian researchers whose aim is simply to make the scientific truth known. They are not interested in such an objective if the unity of the Church is not promoted or, even more, when the unity of the Church is in danger. If this pastoral dimension and objective of Patristic theology is not considered seriously, and if its decisive significance in dealing with heresies is not realised, it will not be possible to understand correctly the patristic anti-heretical positions and formulations.

### *2. Ideological Orthodoxy and the Church's Orthodoxy*

Apparently the objections of the above mentioned orthodox theologians are connected mainly to the characterisation of the anti-Chalcedonian followers of Dioscorus as "orthodox". In this context we should be allowed to give an answer to certain questions which may have come up concerning this matter. For example, is it lawful from an Orthodox point of view for Dioscorus and his followers to be characterised as Orthodox, when at the same time in the conscience of the Church they are condemned heretics?

Even though these questions have been indirectly answered above, in order to give clear answers we have to keep in mind that the meaning of true Orthodoxy for the Fathers of the Church is not ideological but ecclesiological. That is why the Fathers of the Church do not hesitate to regard as saints and

[24] See John Karmiris, *Τὰ Δογματικὰ καὶ Συμβολικὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, Volume 1 (Athens ²1960), 378.

great teachers of the Church certain earlier Fathers who, although they put forward certain incorrect dogmatic views, were always in full communion with the Church until the end of their lives, for example St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine. On the other hand, they characterise as "orthodox" from a clearly ideological point of view certain heretics who, having retained their Orthodoxy in relation to the essence of the dogma, were regarded as heretics because they severed their communion with the Church. A typical example of this is again St. John Damascene, this profound and precise dogmatologist of the Orthodox faith, who characterises as "orthodox" not only Dioscorus and his followers but also other heretics in his work *De Haeresibus*.

Here is how Damascene describes two other heretical movements the "Ικέται" and the "Αὐτοπροσκόπται". "*Iketae*; they are ascetics who are Orthodox in everything else, but they gather together with women ascetics and offer hymns to God with some kind of choir and dance (...)" ("Ικέται· οἵτινες ἀσκηταὶ μὲν ὑπάρχουσιν, ὀρθόδοξοι ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ὄντες, συναγόμενοι δὲ ἅμα γυναιξὶν ἀσκητρίαις, ὕμνους τῷ Θεῷ προσφέρουσι μετὰ χορείας τινὸς καὶ ὀρχήσεως (...)");[25] "*Autoproskoptae*; they are Orthodox in everything, but without any fear they cut themselves off from the universal Church and communion on an insignificant pretext" ("Αὐτοπροσκόπται· πάντα μὲν ὀρθόδοξοι ὑπάρχοντες, ἀδεῶς δὲ τῆς καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ κοινωνίας σφᾶς αὐτοὺς προφάσεώς τινος εὐτελοῦς ἕνεκα ἀποκόπτοντες").[26]

If the meaning of "Orthodoxy" was simply a theological ideology and nothing else, St. John Damascene who is distinguished for his dogmatic sensitivity and preciseness would possibly never have characterised the above heretics as "orthodox", and especially the "Αὐτοπροσκόπται" as Orthodox in everything. And this is because this characterisation would have meant the equalisation of the above heretics with the members of the Orthodox Church and would have been contrary to the previous patristic tradition which thought of them as heretics. Consequently, this "orthodoxy" which Damascene attributes to the above heretics exclusively refers to the essence of dogma and has simply an ideological character. For Damascene, though, this ideological orthodoxy which he attributes to them is not enough for him to pardon them as heretics. Besides, this is the reason why he includes them in his work *De Haeresibus* among the other heretics. Certainly we are of the opinion that especially his description of the "Αὐτοπροσκόπται" shows clearly the way in which this ideological orthodoxy differs from real Orthodoxy, which is not simple ideology but communion with the Church. Actually it is amazing that although he characterises them as orthodox in everything, he nevertheless regards them as heretics, for no other reason than that they severed themselves from the communion of the Church, due to a worthless reason, as he says, which, from what he goes on to say, is indeed not so worthless. Therefore ideological orthodoxy, which is orthodoxy according to the essence of dogma and can be attributed even to heretics, is something different to true and complete

[25] See PG 94, 756C-757A.

[26] See PG 94, 761B.

Orthodoxy which is communion with the Church and characterises the Orthodox people. In other words, according to Damascene who summarizes this matter, for the previous Church Fathers, Orthodoxy is not simply ideological, as we have previously stressed, but ecclesiological. If there is no ecclesiological dimension to Orthodoxy, ideological orthodoxy is not enough for someone to be regarded as Orthodox. Communion with the Church is what gives ideological orthodoxy the fullness and Holy-spiritual content of ecclesiastical Orthodoxy.

Pointing out these facts is particularly important if we take into account that the above descriptions made by Damascene concern not simply schismatics, in which case it would be understandable for him to consider them orthodox according to the essence of dogma, but heretics with the full meaning of the word. Besides, when Damascene exclusively refers to schismatics he does not fail to mention it, although he regards them also as heretics in the wider meaning of the term. That is why he includes them in his work *De Haeresibus*.[27] Anyhow, we should keep in mind that the boundaries between schism and heresy are not completely clear, not only in Damascene but generally in the Fathers of the Church. For this reason, many times the terms "schism" and "heresy" alternate in their writings.[28] Certainly this is understandable because the criterion of Orthodoxy and heresy for the Fathers, as has emerged from what we have already said, is not simply ideological but ecclesiological.

Consequently, if it communicates the fact that the Fathers can attribute ideological orthodoxy even to heretics wherever they ascertain it, no one should be tempted to think that, when the orthodoxy of Dioscorus and his anti-Chalcedonian followers is mentioned, the Fathers of the Church who think of them as heretics are being disputed and in this way the Orthodox conscience of the Church is being offended. Only if one does not distinguish between the Orthodoxy of the Church and the ideological orthodoxy of certain heretics will he be able to reach such conclusions. And this is because he cannot understand that, where scientific views on the subject of Dioscorus and the Orthodoxy of his anti-Chalcedonian followers are being stated, this concerns only the ideological orthodoxy of the heretics who have been condemned by the Church's conscience. This orthodoxy is not identified with the Church's Orthodoxy. In this context we would like to ask: is the Orthodox conscience of the Church or the heretical character of the *Ἱκέται* and the *Αὐτοπροσκόπται* offended in such a way that one could think that the Fathers who thought of them as heretics were mistaken, when Damascene characterises them as "orthodox", especially the *Αὐτοπροσκόπται* as "orthodox in every way"? Absolutely and categorically not. For Damascene knows that he is talking about the ideological orthodoxy of certain heretics. That is why he is not at all troubled about characterising them as "orthodox". In other words, the subject of the ideological orthodoxy or heresy

[27] See for example PG 94, 720AB.

[28] See for example the characterisation of the Arians by St. Basil the Great, other times as "heretics" and others as "schism" (see *Περὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος* 30, 76, PG 32, 212C; *Ἐπιστολὴ* 204, *Τοῖς Νεοκαισαρεῦσιν*, 6, PG 32, 753B; *Ἐπιστολὴ* 214, *Τερεντίῳ κόμητι*, 3, PG 32, 788B), although he attempts in his first canonical letter to make a clear distinction between the heresies, the schisms and the rival assemblies (see *Ἐπιστολὴ 188*, *Ἀμφιλοχίῳ περὶ κανόνων*, 1, PG 32, 665AB).

of Dioscorus and his followers is not a subject of interest for the Church, but only of scientific interest. For the Church this subject has already been solved: Dioscorus and his anti-Chalcedonian followers, as we have stressed many times, are heretics because they refused to accept the Church's ecumenical decision during the Fourth Ecumenical Council. Nevertheless, the subject of the ideological orthodoxy or heresy of Dioscorus and his followers is mainly and exclusively of scientific interest. Therefore, it is a task for the science of theology, and especially for the fields of History of Dogma and Dogmatics, to answer certain individual questions which emerge during the study of their works or other connected source texts. Such questions could possibly be: a) whether or not Dioscorus and his anti-Chalcedonian followers accept the consubstantiality of the nature of Christ and our nature, b) whether or not, together with regarding the characteristic properties of the natures as common in the person of the Word Incarnate, they also accept their distinction into godly and manly, attributing the godly to Christ's divinity and the manly to His humanity, c) whether the expressions "ἐκ δύο φύσεων" ("out of two natures") and "μία φύσις μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν" ("one nature after the union") are understood in the Cyrillian or the Eutychian meaning, d) whether their denial of accepting "two natures" in Christ is due to the acceptance of the Monophysite Christology of Eutyches or to their fear of Nestorius' Dyophysite Christology, etc. Of course, it is proper to listen to what the special scientific papers and doctoral theses have to say on these matters. Whatever their conclusions may be, they will not at all offend the Church's faith and evaluation of the anti-Chalcedonians. In these scientific matters, according to the wise saying of St. Gregory the Theologian "to succeed is not unworthy and to fail is not dangerous" ("καὶ τὸ ἐπιτυγχάνειν οὐκ ἄχρηστον, καὶ τὸ διαμαρτάνειν ἀκίνδυνον").[29] Only if someone confuses or identifies ideological orthodoxy, which can characterise even the heretics, with genuine Orthodoxy, which is the full communion with the Orthodox Church, can he be disturbed by the conclusions of scientific research and believe that, in order to justify the characterisation of Dioscorus and his followers as heretics, it is necessary for them to have heretical elements also in relation to the essence of dogma. If he is not even troubled by the fact that St. John Damascene, referring to heretics (the anti-Chalcedonians, the *Ἱκέται* and the *Αὐτοπροσκόπται*) characterises them "orthodox", he will never understand the specific difference between the ecclesiological and the ideological view of the heresies, or more particularly between the pastoral way of dealing with them and their scientific evaluation, in this way getting rid of the "scandal" of the ideological and scientific evaluation as "orthodox" of the anti-Chalcedonians, i.e. Dioscorus and his followers.

*Conclusion*

After all that we have said, we think it comes out clearly that, although St. John Damascene regards the anti-Chalcedonians as "heretics" because they refused to accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council, he nevertheless does not hesitate to

[29] See *Λόγος ΚΖ΄, Θεολογικὸς Α΄, Κατὰ Εὐνομιανῶν προδιάλεξις*, 10, PG 36, 25A.

acknowledge their ideological orthodoxy or, in other words, their orthodoxy according to the essence of dogma, characterising them as "orthodox" in everything else.

This ascertainment is of great significance and is decisive for the promotion of the Theological Dialogue with the anti-Chalcedonians or, as we call them nowadays, non-Chalcedonians or Oriental Orthodox. In other words, during our theological contacts with them, we as Orthodox should ask from them nothing more than what our Church Fathers asked during all the centuries after the schism of 451, in order for them to come back to the Orthodox Church: To fully accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council, and of course also the following Ecumenical Councils, which continue and essentially confirm the Fourth Ecumenical Council, being holy and Ecumenical. Exactly as they rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council and broke away from the Orthodox Church, in the same way, as long as they accept the Fourth Ecumenical Council, the dogmatic cause of their separation from the Orthodox Church will be automatically lifted and the basic and necessary prerequisite for their reunification will be created. It is to this end to which all our Theological connections with the anti-Chalcedonians should be driven and our attitude as Orthodox on this matter should be unified and universal.

# The Romanian Theologians and the Dialogue with the Old Oriental Churches (or Oriental Orthodox Churches)

*Fr. Vasile Răducă*

The Romanian Orthodox Church was established and carried out her activity in a geographic space with no extensive relationships with the non-Chalcedonian Churches, and implicitly no competition, disputes or conflicts of cultural, political or patrimonial nature, as happened with other Churches of the Near East and Africa. Her most frequent contacts were with the Armenian Church. As the Armenians had to leave their country because of the difficulties created by the Ottoman Turks, many of them settled in the territories inhabited by the Orthodox Romanians. The Romanians and Armenians lived together for hundreds of years with no conflicts between the two Churches.

In the 19th century, after the setting up of the Faculties of Theology on Romanian territory, Romanian theologians wished to know the doctrine of the Armenian Church, one of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. During the working session of 15 May 1891, the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Church of Romania declared that the accusations of Monophysitism brought against the Armenians in the 12th century by Euthymius Zigabenus were false and generated by hatred.[1]

In 1902, Fr. Dimitrie Dan published a work dedicated to the study of the theology of the Armenian Church. Based on the writings of Armenian theologians, on their confession of faith and on their liturgical books, Dimitrie Dan stated: "Today, no knowledgeable person would ever accuse the Armenians of Monophysitism, because they are not adherents of this heresy and deserve to be recognised as Orthodox Christians".[2] The two points of view mentioned above show the atmosphere in which the Orthodox Romanians and the non-Chalcedonian Armenians lived together throughout the years.

On the 1500th anniversary of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, the Romanian theologians wrote on the importance of the Council of Chalcedon and on the need for a dialogue with the non-Chalcedonian Churches. Justinian, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church at the time, was directly involved in the reassessment of the Council of Chalcedon over the centuries and in expressing the point of view of the Romanian Orthodox Church towards the non-Chalcedonian Churches. He wrote and acted in this capacity. In 1951, Patriarch Justinian pointed out in one of the issues of *Ortodoxia*, a Romanian theological review, the fact that ever since her beginning, the Church was organised in accordance with the political organisation of the Roman Empire.

[1] *Official Bulletin* 11 (1891): 2939.

[2] Fr. Dimitrie Dan, *Monofizitismul în Biserica Armeană-orientală* (Cernăuti, 1902), 16.

Canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon removed the anomaly accepted by the other Episcopal sees, through the non-observance of the political-administrative criterion in the organisation of the Church, a criterion observed, in fact, throughout the Christian empire. The Episcopal sees of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch enjoyed priority, not only because they had been set up by Apostles, but also because they were the most important political centres of the Empire. They were no more apostolic than others, although they liked to call themselves "apostolic". "It should be admitted", patriarch Justinian said, "that the Council of Chalcedon was more logical in the implementation of its political principle, than the 'apostolic' sees in the application of their ecclesiastical principle (...). Therefore, if the ranking of the Episcopal sees must be based on apostolicity, then certainly, Jerusalem must be the foremost Christian see".[3]

This fact is worth mentioning because one of the major causes of the schism of 451 was precisely the non-observance of the authority of this Council by the Episcopal see of Alexandria, invoking the apostolic principle which, in fact, it had never observed. The competition among Episcopal sees caused grievous separations. This is why Patriarch Justinian pointed out that "the desire to serve Orthodoxy in faith, love and Christian humility must overcome self pride". To the joint efforts for the welfare of Orthodoxy, Old Orthodox Churches (as Patriarch Justinian termed the non-Chalcedonian Churches) can contribute their moral authority and millennium-old experience.[4] Later on, Patriarch Justinian repeatedly expressed his conviction that the non-Chalcedonian Churches were Orthodox.

In the same year (1951), History Professor Teodor M. Popescu published in the same issue of the *Ortodoxia* review an extensive article on the political, social and church context in which the Council of Chalcedon took place, also assessing the results and consequences of its decisions. Popescu showed that the respective Council was one of the most important political and church events in the history of the Christian Empire. Far from being a mere ecclesiastical event, the Council of Chalcedon was the result of certain tensions and tendencies, ambitions and claims, interests and expectations which had been clearly manifest in the empire for several decades. This Council had political, religious and personal causes and hence its consequences: it shaped the present and future of certain persons, Churches and of the Christian Empire as well. Ever since Constantine the Great and especially since Theodosius the Great, the empire and the Church had shared almost the same territory. "The Empire represented the civilised world (οἰκουμένη). This world included a great number of nations whose languages and cultures did not favour the unity of such a great state as the Roman Empire. This unity could only be guaranteed by unitary faith. Therefore, a shared faith of all Empire citizens also ensured the peace within its borders. The Church, whose leader had to be near the Emperor, was the soul that gave coherence to the citizens of the empire, comprised of numberless nations. Therefore, the presence of the heresies entailed dissidence, schism, and

[3] Justinian, Patriarch of Romania, "Valabilitatea actuală a canonului 28 al sinodului IV ecumenic de la Calcedon," *Ortodoxia* 2-3 (1951): 179.

[4] Ibid., 186.

possible revolt and political separation. Fully aware of the importance of the unity of faith, the Christian emperors wanted to achieve it through political and religious measures. The ideal case was for all the peoples to have one common faith (...). The ecumenical councils established the faith of the entire empire, while the many imperial edicts were intended to bring all Christians to the unity of faith necessary for the unity of the state".[5]

Unfortunately, before the Council of Chalcedon was convened, there were heresies held by several kinds of people. For example by Barbarians, such as Semi-Arian Goths, especially those in the army holding influential military and political positions, who were very powerful and upheld and supported any heresy. In their turn the political parties (the Greens and the Blues), with branches all over the Orient, interfered in the religious arguments, supporting various camps. The Greens, for example, on behalf especially of the ordinary people, who did not know any theological subtleties, supported the most vocal representatives. And it was precisely the heretics who were the most vocal. The monks, whose number had grown massively across the empire, and whose theological culture was rather poor, made the masses of the faithful become easy prey to manipulation by certain religious leaders. Besides there were also claims of hegemony in the honorary hierarchy of the Episcopal sees, and the nationalism and desire of certain peoples, such as the Egyptians, who wanted to be emancipated from the authority of Constantinople at any cost. In Egypt, for example, the strong opposition against foreigners was promoted mainly by the monks. For several decades, Shenouda of Atripe was the indisputable leader of this xenophobic, nationalist movement, which was very powerful during the first half of the 5$^{th}$ century.

It is our conviction and that of the Romanian theologians in general, that the true causes of the schism of 451 and of the emergence of the non-Chalcedonian Churches were not theological, but administrative, cultural and political ones. The same causes are those which today account for the hostile attitude of certain Orthodox theologians towards non-Chalcedonians, unless it is due to ignorance, fanaticism, confessional pride and ill will.

Without going into doctrinal subtleties, Popescu thinks that, from a theological point of view, the Chalcedonian schism was caused by the disagreement of the Council members over the terms of *physis* and *hypostasis*. He also mentions that the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which took very important and precise disciplinary measures and formulated a confession of faith using both the Letter of Leon of Rome to Flavian of Constantinople and the contribution of the members attending the Council, *did not condemn Dioscorus as a heretic*.[6]

Declaring somebody as a heretic was one of the handiest weapons in the Middle Ages. Why wasn't Dioscorus declared a heretic? That is because the members of the Council realised that, in fact, he was not a Monophysite in the

[5] Teodor M. Popescu, "Importanta istorică a sinodului al IV-lea ecumenic," *Ortodoxia* 2-3 (1951): 198.

[6] Ibid., 254; and Karl-Joseph Hefele, *Histoire des conciles, d'après les documents originaux, Traduction française, corrigée et augmentée par H. Leclerq*, tome II/2 (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1909), 684-685 and 699-700.

sense Eytyches was. He had adopted the old formula (stemming from Apollinarius and Saint Athanasius the Great) employed by Saint Cyril: "Μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη", which although formally different from the Constantinopolitan formula, "Δύο φύσεις ἕνα Πρόσωπον" adopted by the Council, actually expressed the same truth: the fact that the Logos of God was made man and kept this human nature forever.

In his turn, Fr. Ioan Pulpea-Răмureanu, Church History Professor, wrote in a study published in the same review that "the two main Oriental peoples of the Byzantine Empire, the Syrians and the Egyptians, were trying to separate themselves from the Greeks, the Romaioi, and starting to come closer and closer to the political sphere of Asia".[7]

Professor Pulpea-Răмureanu describes the church and political evolution of the Christian area which rejected Chalcedon. He speaks of the various scissions as well as about the emergence of the so-called "Monophysite" Churches. He analyses the phrasing of several confessions of faith of the non-Chalcedonian Churches and the points of view of some theologians deemed to be Monophysite (including Severus of Antioch, the leading doctrinarian of "Monophysitism"). He emphasises the assertion of Saint John Damascene, according to which the Egyptians, called schismatics and Monophysites, "under pretext of the decision of Chalcedon, separated from the Orthodox Church (...) but otherwise are Orthodox in all other respects".[8]

The same Professor Pulpea-Răмureanu goes on to quote the opinions of some remarkable modern theologians and draws the conclusion that: "The Monophysite Churches are far from the heresy of Eutyches, but for some sects that developed in their bosom later on, especially within the Monophysite Church of Egypt. Thus, the Severian Monophysites (...) kept a nominal, verbal Monophysitism, named moderate Monophysitis[9] which actually stems from a misunderstanding of the terms which could have been overcome had they given up their biased stance and their love for polemics. This is the reason why the emperors of Constantinople sought, later on, various ways of reintegrating the non-Chalcedonians into Orthodoxy".[10]

On the occasion of the commemoration of the Council of Chalcedon, Father Dumitru Stăniloae published a comprehensive study[11] in which he explains the way in which the Council members formulated the dogmatic definition of Chalcedon. He undertakes, in fact, an extensive study of Christology, starting from texts dating from the 4th century, continuing with the Christology of the Council of Ephesus, with its consequences until Chalcedon, and reaching the Fifth Ecumenical Council.

In order to express the unity of the two natures in the person of Christ, the members of the Council stated, among other things, the following: "We have

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[7] Deacon lecturer I. Pulpea (Răмureanu), "Posibilitatea întoarcerii Bisericilor monofizite la Ortodoxie," *Ortodoxia* 4 (1951): 593.

[8] *Περὶ Αἱρέσεων*, 82, PG 94, 741A.

[9] Pulpea, "Posibilitatea întoarcerii Bisericilor monofizite la Ortodoxie," 624.

[10] Ibid., 629.

[11] Dumitru Stăniloae, "Definitia dogmatică de la Calcedon," *Ortodoxia* 2-3 (1951), 294-441.

all learned to confess in one voice: One and the Same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, known in two natures without any confusion, change, division or separation, the union not abolishing the difference of the two natures, but rather maintaining the property of each nature and joining them in one person and one *hypostasis*, not divided into two persons, but in One and the same Son, Only-Begotten, God-the-Word, Jesus Christ, our Lord".[12] In his commentary on the dogmatic definition of Chalcedon, Father Stăniloae said: "Chalcedon established that (...) the person is different from nature, that a person cannot be without nature, neither the nature without a person, that there is a close relationship between person and nature and so, their existence is mutually dependent, and that a nature can subsist in a person different from it, so that two natures can coexist in one person, without the duality of the natures to affect the unity of the person, given the precise distinction of the levels".

More exactly, Chalcedon established that human nature can be *hypostasis*ed in the person of the divine Word, that it finds in Him its perfect person and full freedom, or that He can become the perfect person of human nature, so that man, close to God, can fulfil himself as a person and as freedom. But Father Stăniloae points out that "the mysterious heart of the matter, namely how the divine *hypostasis* became a *hypostasis* of the human nature, or how human nature found its own *hypostasis* in him, continues to be a theme of meditation for the theological thought (...). A vast field of theological opinions is opened here".[13]

This remark can be a conclusion too, given the consequences of Chalcedon and the multitude of explanations concerning the mystery of the Incarnation and the attempts to find a formula generally accepted by all Churches, especially by those set up through the denial of Chalcedon.

*The dilemma of Christological formulations*

After analysing the confessions and interpretations given to the Incarnation of the Word of God by the contemporaries of the Council of Chalcedon and by those who followed after them, be they Chalcedonian or non-Chalcedonian, I understood the seriousness of their position when they engaged in explaining the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, risking their life for their convictions. Eutyches maintained that the human nature of Christ existed before the Incarnation of the Logos, but that after Incarnation, only the divine nature existed in Christ. None of them denied the idea of the pre-existence of the human nature of Christ. Nor did Pope Leon. But he did not speculate too much on the existence or pre-existence of the two natures, on the way they joined and how they existed after their union. He quite factually started from the concrete accounts by which the Gospels describe Christ, both God and Man, and acting as such. Therefore the Pope asserted the existence of the two natures within one

[12] Eduard Schwartz, *Concilium Universale Chalcedonense*, II, 1, 2 (Berlin-Leipzig, 1914-1920) 126-130, apud Stăniloae, "Definitia dogmatică de la Calcedon," 410-411.

[13] Ibid., 438, 439.

and the same Person, Jesus Christ, God and Man. Eutyches' monophysitism was unanimously condemned. The Alexandrians and Antiochians maintained the idea that in Jesus Christ we have the one nature of the Word of God incarnate/made man. That is what Timothy Elurus thought as well as all the others who rejected Chalcedon. In fact, they were all the victims of Platonic philosophy: Plato's theory of the pre-existent ideas was transposed in the confession according to which the human nature of Christ had pre-existed the Incarnation of the Logos. Had it been an abstract notion, of interest only to philosophy, it would not have raised any problem. But to them it was a concrete one, given the fact that they understood from the historical existence of Christ that the Logos had not assumed any abstraction. If this nature had pre-existed, it could not have pre-existed without human, personal traits. Otherwise, it would not have been a completely human nature. And whatever had not been assumed would have remained unsaved. Alexandrians feared that by postulating that human nature, with personal traits (having been *hypostasis*ed) had been united with the Hypostasis of the Word as such, they would have reached Nestorianism again. That would have meant the rehabilitation of Nestorius against whom the Alexandrians had fought so much, through Saint Cyril. This is why they maintained the Cyrilian formula according to which in Christ there is "the one Nature incarnate of God-the-Word". It is a subtle formula from a philosophical point of view, which can however lead to risky interpretations when taken out of the context of Platonic philosophy. Against the backdrop of what was discussed at the synod chaired by Dioscorus at Ephesus in 449, the Fathers attending the Chalcedon Council did no longer insist on the nuances of the Christological formulations, but started from the formula provided by Leo of Rome in his letter to Saint Flavian of Constantinople, to draft the well-known Chalcedonian formula. More precisely, they started from the assertion of the Gospel "And the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). In other words, the human nature existed before the Incarnation of the Logos, but one cannot affirm that "the human nature *of the Logos* existed before His Incarnation". The Logos takes His human nature, with no sin, from the Virgin Mary, from the human nature provided by and in the person of the Holy Virgin Mary. This is why the full human nature is *hypostasised in* and *by* the Logos of God, *in* and *from* the moment of the descent of the Spirit of God over her and of her *overshadowing* by the Highest. Only at this moment we can talk about the human nature *of Christ*, not of *its* existence before Incarnation.

This realistic clarification will be made by Leontius of Byzantium one century later, giving up Platonic idealism and resorting to the evangelic realism. Eutyches, Dioscorus and the Non-Chalcedonians were thus tangled in the subtleness of Platonic philosophy in which they had been formed as scholars. The other ones did not succeed in explaining either who was to blame for the risk of the Monophysite perception of a particular formula because, in fact, they were thinking within the same philosophy. They avoided becoming its victims because they remained faithful to the evangelical realism. Subtler from a philosophical point of view than Leo of Rome and also than the hierarchs of Constantinople, the Alexandrians became the victims of their own philosophy. I think that Chalcedon was the last moment in the Church's effort to define the

dogmas which confirmed the fact that philosophy as such does not solve the mysteries of theology. If we take into account the First and Second Ecumenical Councils, we notice that the acceptable formulation of the Truth revealed was reached at the time, only after the field of action of philosophy was given up.

*Patriarch Justinian and the Old Oriental Churches*

The time between 1964 (Aarhus) and 1971 (Chambésy) is a period when the Orthodox theologians and the leaders of the Orthodox and of the non-Chalcedonian Churches met on various occasions. It was now that the meetings took place at Aarhus and Bristol, Addis Ababa and Geneva (organised by the WCC) between the representatives of the Orthodox Churches and of the Old Oriental (Oriental Orthodox) Churches. Professor I.V. Georgescu, who published the decrees of these meetings, stated: "Orthodox and Old Oriental theologians, during the four unofficial discussion sessions, thoroughly addressed the historical and theological issues, with a view to achieving closer relations, without impairing the traditions of each family of Churches, without any compromise or mutual yielding, but as full acknowledgement of the true communion between the two Church families, despite their long separation".[14] During the same period were held the pan-Orthodox Conferences of Rhodes (1961, 1963, 1964) and Chambésy (1971), authorizing and encouraging the contacts between the two Church families.

The dialogue with the Old Churches of the Orient was promoted as early as the first Conference of Rhodes. The Third Conference of Rhodes even urged the national Churches to initiate contacts at their level with the Old Oriental Churches. Given this encouragement the Romanian Orthodox Church was involved to the highest degree, through Patriarch Justinian, in the study of the theology and life of Old Oriental Churches, and in the rapprochement between the two families of Churches.

As we have shown from the very beginning, Patriarch Justinian of the Romanian Orthodox Church really engaged in the process of rapprochement between the Romanian Orthodox faithful and the non-Chalcedonians ones, prompting the theologians of our Church to study this theology and life of the non-Chalcedonian Churches and to sincerely express their points of view on what they had studied. The Romanians had their first meetings with the Armenians as they had co-inhabited for centuries, which allowed them to know each other quite well. The Armenian bishop of Bucharest, Vasken, was elected Catholicos of Armenia. Following his invitation, in October 1966, Patriarch Justinian visited the Armenian Church and its Catholicos at Etchmiadzin. The two Heads of Churches discussed bilateral church matters of common interest. On this occasion, Patriarch Justinian told the representatives of the Armenian Church: "There are solid foundations on which the unity of the past can be regained by the two parts of the Old Church, because in spite of some minor

[14] P.V.I (respectively, Paraschiv V. Ioan, the pseudonym of professor Deacon I. V. Georgescu, who was forbidden to sign any writings following a long time in the Soviet prisons, 1945-1955 and the Romanian communist ones, 1955-1962), "Perspectivele stadiului actual în pregătirea dialogului între Biserica Ortodoxă și Bisericile Vechi Orientale," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1972): 111-112.

differences in faith and worship practices (...) they own the same teaching of faith in its basic points".[15]

In January 1969, Patriarch Justinian visited the Church of Ethiopia. He was the first primate of an Orthodox Church to do so. On that occasion, during the solemn meeting of the synod of the Church of Ethiopia of 16 January 1969, Patriarch Justinian said, among other things: "We have discovered that between our Chalcedonian Churches and the non-Chalcedonian Churches, to which your Church belongs, there have been and are no real doctrinal differences, because, through the different terminologies of the two parts, we see that the same truth was expressed".[16]

The point of view of the Patriarch of Romania was shared by the Ethiopian theologians and hierarchs (such as Metropolitan Theophilos, the future Patriarch) who considered that the two families of Churches (Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian) had the same doctrine. On the occasion of that visit, Patriarch Justinian proposed finding a broader definition to include, besides the two forms of formulae (Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian) the interpretation that established their common meaning acknowledged by both parts: the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian one. The proposal of the former Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church reiterated the opinion of theologians Ioannis Karmiris and John Meyendorff, who belonged to the group of Eastern Orthodox theologians of Aarhus (of 1964), and of Father Stăniloae, as formulated in 1965.

The same year Patriarch Justinian visited the Syrian Orthodox Church of India. In the conference held at the Theological Academy of Kottayam, Patriarch Justinian asserted that from a theological point of view, there were great possibilities for Orthodoxy and the Old Oriental Churches because there were "no essential differences of faith between them, but rather terminological differences for expressing the same faith".[17]

Patriarch Justinian invited to Romania the non-Chalcedonian theologians—archimandrite Paul Verghese, Rector of the Theological Academy of Kottayam, the future Archbishop Mar Gregorios and Bishop Karkin Sarkessian, Rector of the Theological Seminary of Antelias, Lebanon—to deliver lectures at conferences hosted by the Orthodox academic theological institutes of Romania. These two great theologians participated in two symposia in Bucharest through the *Group of studies for promoting dialogue with the Old Oriental Churches*, set up in Bucharest by Patriarch Justinian, where they discussed with the Romanian Theology Professors matters concerning the Christology of the two families of Churches and the possibility of accepting the decisions of Chalcedon. As a result of the discussions and the lectures delivered, the two groups of theologians drew the conclusion, expressed in the words of His Grace Bishop Antim Târgovișteanul, assistant bishop to the Patriarch, that the two families of Churches "have the common conscience that they keep the same doctrinal

[15] *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 9-10 (1966): 859-862; apud. Ion Bria, "Discuții teologice între teologi români și teologi necalcedonieni," *Ortodoxia* 2 (1970): 206-207.

[16] Ibid., 209.

[17] *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 1-2 (1969): 53.

backdrop, the same faith, but expressed in different terminologies and nuances";[18] but, as one of the participants would say, "while the Chalcedonians stress the perfect balance of the divinity and humanity in Christ, Who is perfect God and perfect Man, the non-Chalcedonians often underlined and underline the preponderance of the divine, an element specific to the Alexandrine school".[19] But, let us not forget that the Orthodox Church always explains that in Christ the human will follows the divine one. As the will expresses the nature, it means, in fact, that in Christ there is the preponderance of the divine nature over the human one, the natures never losing their identity, in fact, it is a common tenet of the Chalcedonians and of the non-Chalcedonians alike. As for the reception of Chalcedon, the Orthodox theologians admitted that, because of its complexity, it was achieved through a long process marked by controversies and church debates. "The Old Oriental Churches", said Rev. Prof. Ioan G. Coman in his lecture, "did not evince a juridical reception of the Council of Chalcedon at the time, but, besides the different terminologies, their Christology is essentially the same".[20] The Romanian theology professors have frequently expressed their opinion that, in spite of the different terminology which leads to the idea of great theological differences, there are great expectations of rapprochement between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. In September 1971, a delegation of the Syrian Church of Malabar headed by the Secretary of the Holy Synod of this Church, Metropolitan Daniel Mar Philoxenus, came to Bucharest at the invitation of Patriarch Justinian. On that occasion, a colloquy was organised with the Romanian theologians in order to organise the beginning of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the non-Chalcedonian one.

In Romania, Patriarch Justinian received Patriarch Kyrillus of the Coptic Church, who visited the Romanian Orthodox Church, and in 1971 Patriarch Justinian attended the enthronement of patriarch Shenouda III of the Coptic Church and of Patriarch Theophilus of the Church of Ethiopia. Patriarch Justinian offered scholarships to students of the non-Chalcedonian Churches (Armenian, Ethiopian, Coptic and Syrian of Malabar) who were sent to study theology in Bucharest. Later on, two Romanian scholars studied in Addis Ababa (Nicolae Dură, the future professor of Canon Law) and Cairo (Nicolae Necula, the future professor of Liturgics). The primate of the Romanian Orthodox Church prompted theologians to study thoroughly and in all sincerity the theology of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. This great Patriarch was the heart of the process of mutual knowledge and rapprochement between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the non-Chalcedonian Churches.

[18] Bria, "Discuții teologice între teologi români și teologi necalcedonieni," 222.

[19] Ibid., 219.

[20] Ibid., 225.

After the meetings between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian theologians at Aarhus, Bristol and Addis Ababa, the Romanian theologians wrote several studies on the theology and life of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. Just before these meetings, Professor Nicolae Chițescu of the University Theological Institute of Bucharest published a study on the theology and present life of these Churches.

In this study[21] Professor Chițescu wrote that the detachment of these Churches from the body of the Orthodox Church represents *the most distressing and preposterous page in the history of the Orthodox Church*: "What renders this separation senseless and even absurd is the small number of the differences of faith, rite and organisation between them and the Orthodox Church".[22]

Professor Chițescu in his study presents the doctrine and historical evolution of the non-Chalcedonian Churches, pointing out the similarities and differences between them, on the one hand, and the Orthodox Churches, on the other hand, as well as the attempts at union (especially those between the Armenian Church and the one of Constantinople).

We know that the refusal to accept the Orthodoxy of the non-Chalcedonian Churches is related to the interpretation (ἑρμηνεία) given by the Chalcedonians to the formula of Saint Cyril of Alexandria (taken over from Saint Athanasius and Apollinarius) "μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη". This formula was not accepted by the Council of Chalcedon, as it had been coined by Apollinarius and because it had been used not only by Saint Cyril, but also by Eutyches.[23] Nevertheless, Professor Chițescu thinks that for Saint Cyril this formula has no longer the same meaning it had for Eutyches and Apollinarius.

While evoking the attempts at union between the Armenian Church and the Church of Constantinople at the time of Justinian II, Professor Chițescu refers to the interpretation given at the time by Saint Germanos of Constantinople to the well-known Christological formulation mentioned above. He thinks that Saint Cyril used the term "*physis*" and not "prosopon" to combat Nestorianism more strongly. Saint Germanos said that this formula does not exclude, but implies the two natures, their union and distinction. "That is because we do not say that the two natures were incarnate, but only one, namely that of the divine Word, incarnate through the reception of the body, soul and mind. When we confess the properties of both natures together, we understand no other than that the body the Word received was not changed while taking divine nature, through the communion with a bodily nature; and neither that divinity, while taking rational body and soul (...) changed into a bodily nature and neither did it give

[21] Nicolae Chițescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," *Ortodoxia* 4 (1961): 483-555.

[22] Ibid., 484.

[23] Ioan G. Coman, "Momente si aspecte ale hristologiei precalcedoniene si calcedoniene," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1965): 56, 58.

up anything of its glory, or changed it (...). Thus, our Cyril and our great teacher (Saint Athanasius) teach the same thing using the same language".[24]

It is one of the first times after Chalcedon, when a Chalcedonian admits that the Christological formula not accepted by the Council of Chalcedon and held by many people as heretical, is Orthodox. Professor Chiţescu also speaks about some other attempts at union between the Armenian Church and that of Constantinople, which did not last because of the historical conditions rather than reasons of a theological nature. He thinks that the differences between the two Churches (Armenian and Orthodox) "are not such as to move us away from this martyr Church, of the Armenians; some of them bear the marks of the sad times they passed through".[25]

As for the separation of the Egyptian Church from the Church of Constantinople, Professor Chiţescu says that it was due to nationalist reasons rather than religious ones. As for Christology, in the case of the Copts, Professor Chiţescu thinks that we have the same situation as in the case of the Armenian Christology: "we have a verbal Monophysitism, namely an Orthodox Christology, expressed in "Monophysite" terminology".[26]

The reason for this verbal Monophysitism lies, says Professor Chiţescu, in the confusion the Copts make between *person* and *nature*. "The difference between the conception of the Ecumenical Church, namely of the Orthodox Church and that of the Coptic Church, lies in the fact that, according to the former one, the Logos is the person who unites the two natures in Himself, while according to the latter, the divine nature (of the Logos) receives the human nature in Himself and both of them make the unique nature of Christ, to which a single will corresponds".[27]

In fact, the Alexandrians could not conceive that a human nature could be complete without personal manifestations. Cautious not to fall into Nestorianism by using the term of "person", in Christology, they used consciously, not because of any confusion, the term "nature" (*physis*) understanding it as having personal qualities; in other words, it is a *hypostasis*. As the person expresses nature and nature expresses the person, according to the Chalcedonian formulation, cautious not to fall into dyoprosopism, from δυο (two) and πρόσωπον (person), the Egyptians maintained and still maintain that the divine nature of the Logos receives the human nature in it in such a way that Christ will have only one will through the union of the two natures. The Egyptians were reluctant to affirm that there might be two wills in Christ because the presence of the will involving the person would have been Nestorianism, just what the Ecumenical Council III had condemned. Having

[24] St. Gherman of Constantinopolului, *In favoarea Sinodului calcedonian*, PG 98, 135-146; apud Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 497-498.

[25] Ibid., 501.

[26] Ibid., 506.

[27] Ibid., 507.

used first hand sources,[28] Professor Chiţescu quoted texts from the works of the Coptic patriarchs proving their Orthodox faith. Thus, Patriarch Shenouda (ordained in 859) said: "We think that when the time came, God sent His Only Begotten Son, who was incarnate, was made like us in everything, from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, taking perfect body, with no sin (...). He suffered in the body for us (...). This is why the natures, united from the very beginning, are not separated in any way, the Word deciding that they should not be separated, even during the Passion He received in His Body".[29]

Patriarch Menas of Alexandria (958-970) said in his confession of faith: "I confess a single nature and perfect person, incarnate, of a single Logos, out of two, through the union, without the destruction, mixture and decay of any one of them (...). We think and affirm that Christ is only one, the Son of God, of two natures, the divine and the human one".[30]

Chiţescu also described the failed attempts at union of the non-Chalcedonians and Orthodox Church, and then concluded: "the reasons for the separation were not religious, but political. They no longer exist today; *this is why it is absurd to still maintain effects deprived of cause*. The differences enhanced throughout the centuries of hard life the Coptic Church and the Orthodox one knew, are secondary: they concern worship practices and ad-ministration, whereas the dogmatic ones, concerning the Christology, are purely verbal".[31]

While presenting the Syrian Orthodox Church, Chiţescu pointed out that the dogmatic differences between this Church and the Orthodox Church are only Christological. He presented texts of a few representative theologians of this Church and commented on them. He began with the "prince of the Monophysite theologians", Severus of Antioch (+538). He pointed out that Severus used many Orthodox Christological formulae in his writings and that he confessed and taught the consubstantiality of Christ, both with the human nature taken from the Virgin, and with the divine nature, and that the union of the two natures was made with no confusion or change. In order to substantiate these findings, Chiţescu quotes the work of Severus. One of the texts used by Chiţescu is the following: "The One who has been from eternity of one being with the One who begets Him, came down and was made of one being with His Mother. He was made human, while being God; He became what He was not, while remaining what He was with no change, because He has not lost divinity through His Incarnation and His body has not lost the quality submitted to the senses of His (human) nature. As true God, perfect in everything belonging to His being, He

[28] Such as the books of Eusèbe Renaudot, *Liturgiarum Orientalium Collectio* (Frankfurt am Main, 1847) and *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum* (Paris, 1713), as well as the writing *Histoire critique des dogmes, des controverses, des coutumes et des cérémonies des chrétiens orientaux* (Frankfurt, 1693).

[29] Eusèbe Renaudot, *Historia Patriarharum*, 305; apud Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 508.

[30] Ibid., 361; apud Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 509.

[31] Ibid., 513.

came down and took true body from the body of the Virgin and suffered no change in what He was, by becoming man".[32]

Chiţescu thinks that Severus employs "a moderate Monophysite language" due to the synonymy of the terms *physis*, *hypostasis* and *prosopon*. "We confess, Severus says, that *hypostasis* and *ousia*, namely *physis*, are not the same thing with regard to theology; but with regard to economy, they are identical".[33] Professor Chiţescu quoted two other great Syrian theologians of the Middle Ages, Dionysius Bar Salibi (+1171) and Gregory Barhaebraeus, pointing out the obvious Orthodoxy of their confessions.[34]

The texts mentioned from the three great Syrian theologians entitle the Romanian theologian to state: "This synonymy gives sense to all apparently Monophysite formulae of the Syrian Jacobite theologians: Μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη (of Saint Cyril the Alexandrian) and it means: one Person of God-the-Word incarnate; ἕνωσις φυσικὴ means: hypostatic union; ἕνωσις κατὰ σύνθεσιν is union with no mixture (...)".[35]

To conclude the presentation of the Syro-Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox) Church, Chiţescu said: "We cannot help making a sad observation: the glorious Apostolic Church which gave the name of Christians to the Saviour's disciples, the see of a great pleiad of great saints and teachers of the Church (...) is divided and disrupted, just like the one of Alexandria, for nationalist reasons, completely outdated today, and for vain human ambitions (...) On the edge of the precipice, where all are drawn, one after another, they ought to regain the conscience of their dignity of Christians, of heirs of some traditions which marked the past of the Christian Church and, overcoming what divides them, they ought to re-establish their unity, broken for outdated reasons".[36]

Chiţescu was one of the Romanian theologians delegated by the Romanian Orthodox Church at the meetings between Orthodox and non-

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[32] Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 530, apud M. Jugie, "Monophysisme. (Eglise copte)," *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. X, 2 (1929) col. 2221.

[33] Severus of Antioch, PG 86, 1921; apud Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici", 531.

[34] Dionysius Salibi says: the Body (human nature) and the Logos are called "one nature", not because they have the same essence, but because of the composition and union (*Treatise against the Nestorians*). In the interpretation of the Divine Liturgy, while commenting on the words of the Creed "and was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man" the same one said: "He was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, or united with God-the-Word with the body and was made man with no change or transformation and suffered death in body for our salvation". When Gregory Barhebraeus was asked: "if Christ is of one being with the Father, and of one being with Mary too, how is it that He had no two natures, with which to be equal to the unequal", he would answer: "That unique nature is twofold, not simple, because according to its special significance, it is equal to the unequal ones. "In the Syrian Anaphora of Dioscorus the following Christological formula can be found: "God sent God Only Begotten for the salvation of our nation, the One incarnated of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and born through a physical birth beyond understanding and fully made Son of Man, afterwards always remaining God with no change, planning and doing everything for our salvation." Cf. Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 530, fns. 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, apud Jugie, "Monophysisme. (Eglise copte)" 2221, 2234, 2233.

[35] Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 531.

[36] Ibid., 534. In 1965 scholar Cezar Vasiliu presented the Syro-Jacobite Church in a very competent study drafted under the supervision of Ion Rămureanu, entitled "Jacobite Monophysite Church," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1965): 132-148.

Chalcedonians at Aarhus, Bristol and Chambésy. In 1965, he published the study entitled "The Formula: A single incarnate nature of the Logos of God".[37] It was the text of the lecture he delivered within the meeting between a number of representative theologians of the Orthodox Churches and of the non-Chalcedonian Churches, held at the University of Aarhus, in 1964.

The author analyses in this study the formula of Saint Cyril φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη and explains that Saint Cyril just like the entire Alexandrine school, stressed two truths in his Christology: the divinity of the Saviour and the unity of the two natures in the person of the one person of the incarnate Logos. The starting point of the Christology of Saint Cyril, says Chiţescu, is the Word, which he calls *prosopon*, *hypostasis*, and *physis*, because of the divine nature which the second divine *hypostasis* fully possesses. Sometimes Cyril clearly distinguishes nature from *hypostasis*, some other times he equates the nature with the *hypostasis*. Chiţescu analysed the above-mentioned formula first of all in the works of Saint Cyril to prove to what extent the use of the concept of *nature* instead of that of *hypostasis* is a Monophysite formulation or not. He examined Epistle XLVI of Saint Cyril. Here, the great Alexandrian father said among other things: "Indeed, the nature of the Logos is one; but we know that He was incarnate and was made man" and continues that, while declaring this, he teaches neither like Arius nor like Apollinarius; neither did he preach that the Logos of God was changed into the body, or that, on the contrary, the body was changed into divine nature.[38] Along the line of the same Christological formula, Saint Cyril said in Epistle XLV addressed to Succensus: "the Logos of God-the-Father was made man (...). Analysing the way of humanisation, we understand that the two natures were linked together in an indissoluble union, with no confusion or change; that because the body is body, not divinity, even if it has become the body of God. The same thing can be said about the Logos, which is God not body, even if He has become body according to the economy. This is why, if we understand that, we do not detract from the unity by asserting that it was done in two natures; but after union, we do no longer separate the natures one from another and neither do we see as two sons, the One and the Undivided, but affirm that the Son is One as the Fathers taught that *the incarnate nature of the Logos of God is one*. Thus, if we look at and contemplate with the eyes of the soul the way in which the Only Begotten One was made man, we say that the two natures were united, but we confess that Christ the One, both Son and Lord, the Logos of God-the-Father, was made man and incarnate (...) This is why we teach that the body of Christ is divine, because it is the body of God and adorned with glory, being incorruptible, holy, and life-giving. Yet, it was not changed into divinity and neither do we say that the divine nature was changed into human nature".[39]

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[37] *Ortodoxia* 3 (1965): 295-307.

[38] Letter 40, PG 77, 192; 193; 200; apud N. Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 301.

[39] PG 77, 229; 232-233; 236; 237; apud Chiţescu, "Ortodoxia si Bisericile Răsăritene mai mici," 301, 302.

We must keep in mind that, in the Greek patristic language, σάρξ does not mean just simply flesh, but living body. This is why the average past participle σεσαρκωμένη means "he was made man", not "was incarnate". Saint Cyril said that in his second Epistle to Succensus. Based on Bible texts, Saint Cyril showed that in the Incarnation of the Logos the Divinity was really united with the human nature, with no change and confusion, and a single Son remained, but not without body (οὐκ ἀσώματος),[40] as it was before, but vested in our own nature. This is why we confess the Only Son and Christ and Lord, because the Logos was made body. When we say *body*, we say man. And Saint Cyril also says: "He has not mixed the natures, as some people think. Indeed, the nature of the Logos has not changed into the nature of the body, neither the nature of body into the nature of the Logos, but there remained a single nature of the Logos, but incarnate (namely made man)".[41]

We understand, from the three epistles from which Chițescu quoted and from which we rendered a few sentences, that Saint Cyril appreciated the formulation perceived by some Chalcedonians as Monophysite, without understanding it in the Monophysite sense.

In fact, the great Romanian patrologist Fr. Ioan G. Coman asserted that Saint Cyril uses alternatively both the so-called Monophysite formula, and "A single incarnate *hypostasis* of the Logos".[42] He afforded a certain freedom in this regard, especially since they were not the only formulations by which he confessed and presented his Christology. Through the formula incriminated by some people as "Monophysite", the great Alexandrine father tried to emphasise the unseparated and undivided union of the Logos of God with the human nature, with no confusion, and without the identification or loss of any nature one into another, but excluding the risk to fall into the Nestorian dyoprosopism: after Incarnation, the Logos of God remains the Same, but incarnate, namely made man.

Thus, where is the Monophysitism of the formula? It is only in the mind of the ill-willed ones and of the slaves of the literal interpretation. N. Chițescu shows that at the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) "the Confession" of Justinian was the first Chalcedonian document which understood that Cyril's formulation was an Orthodox one. But in order to be accepted without reserve by the non-Chalcedonians, the word "nature" had to be replaced with "*hypostasis*", as the *hypostasis* was certainly nature. The Alexandrians liked and still like this formulation because they cannot think of a *hypostasis* without nature, neither the human nature without personal qualities. Had He not had personal qualities they say, the Logos of God would not have assumed a complete nature (and

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[40] *Letter 46 (To Succensus)*, PG 77, 241; Cf. Ioan G. Coman, *op. cit.*, 56.

[41] PG 77, 237-245; apud N. Chițescu, *op. cit.*, 302.

[42] Coman, "Momente si aspecte ale hristologiei precalcedoniene si calcedoniene," 55. In this sense Father Coman gives several references from the works of Saint Cyril: *Adversus Nestorii Blasphemias*, *II*, PG 76, 60D; *Letter 17*, PG 77, 116C; *Letter 40*, PG 77, 193B; *Letter 44*, PG 77, 225; *Letter 46*, PG 241A; *Apologeticus pro Duodecim Capitibus Adversus Orientales Episcopos*, PG 76, 349B.

what was not assumed was not saved), the full man, but something else, possibly a simple body without soul as Apollinarius claims, which would have been very risky for Christology itself.

The Fifth Ecumenical Council anathematized those who intended to introduce the teaching on a single nature of Christ, as a result of the union of the two natures (divine and human). In other words, there would have been a third nature, as a result of the union of the divine nature of the Hypostasis of the divine Logos with the human nature. Cyril's formula does not allow for such a possible interpretation, and neither did the non-Chalcedonians of olden times, and neither do the present ones teach such a thing. Both he and the latter ones accept the fact that *the one nature* (namely the individualised existence of the divine being in the Logos of God, namely the person of the Son) of the Word was made man, without becoming something else (human nature) and neither the human nature becoming something else (divine nature). The *one nature* of the Logos remained what it had always been, but from now on, incarnate, in other words, uniting in it without division, separation or confusion the human nature assumed from the Holy Virgin.

As for the Cyrillian formula, to avoid creating confusion in the minds of those less inclined to theological subtleties, Chițescu says we should not stick to this formula. It is not essential to the Christology of Saint Cyril. This one has some other formulations at least as valid. The fame of Saint Cyril "is great in the Church, our author says, with or without this formula, and, on the other hand, we are sure that he understood it as the Council of Chalcedon itself did, which formulated the teaching".[43]

After the meeting of Aarhus, the Romanian theologians started studying the non-Chalcedonian Churches with greater attention. The formula of Saint Cyril abusively used by certain Orthodox theologians to prove the heresy of the non-Chalcedonians was analysed by I. G. Coman too, in the study we have already mentioned above, in which he demonstrates that, the formula of Saint Cyril—"One nature of the Logos of God made man"—although it seems dangerous, "it does not deny the reality of the two natures, but affirms that the person of Jesus is unitary and that only the mind could understand the distinction of the natures not annulled through union".[44]

Fr. Coman pointed out that Saint Cyril taught that it is a hypostatic union (ἕνωσις καθ' ὑπόστασιν) and a natural one (ἕνωσις φυσική) between the two natures, not a relational one and only in the order of worship, as Nestorius claimed.[45]

Fr. Coman ends his valuable study saying, among other things: "The Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians had and still have many common elements in their Christology which the centuries passed since the Third and the Fourth Ecumenical Councils till today submitted to many hard trials. The

[43] Ibid., 307.

[44] Coman, "Momente si aspecte ale hristologiei precalcedoniene si calcedoniene," 57.

[45] The apology of the 12 chapters against the Oriental Bishops, PG 76, 332B, Cf. Coman, "Momente si aspecte ale hristologiei precalcedoniene si calcedoniene," 53.

endurance of this Christology demonstrates its power and vitality in the faith of the Orthodox who see the same Lord, the Logos of God incarnate".[46]

After the meeting of Aarhus, Father Stăniloae wrote the study entitled "A possible dogmatic reconciliation between the Orthodox Church and the Old Oriental Churches".[47] It is an exceptional and very courageous study. Stăniloae wrote it one year after he was released from the communist prisons where he had been imprisoned for six years. He wrote this study with all sincerity, commitment and much courage. He started by describing the attitude of the Romanian Orthodox Church towards the non-Chalcedonian Armenians with whom the Romanian Orthodox had lived in the course of time, then explained the points of view of the speakers at Aarhus, both Chalcedonians and Non-Chalcedonians.[48] He examines the points of view of some non-Chalcedonian theologians who are very critical with regard to the Chalcedonian Orthodoxy (of V. C. Samuel), as well as the fact that "the Orthodox theologians participating in the meeting of Aarhus clearly and unanimously recognised that the difference between the Orthodox Church and the Old Oriental Churches in the dogmatic-Christological field has only a terminological character".[49]

Stăniloae notes that three points of view were identified among the non-Chalcedonian theologians, namely: some of them admit the identity of the non-Chalcedonian teaching with the Chalcedonian one and, consequently, accept a combination of their formulae with that of Chalcedon; some other ones admit the identity of their teaching with the Orthodox one, but they are not courageous enough to accept the combination of their formulae with that of Chalcedon; some other ones do not admit the identity of the non-Chalcedonian teaching with the Orthodox one, although, given the way they express their faith and present their teaching, there is no difference between their teaching and the Orthodox one. This is why, Father Stăniloae thinks that the Orthodox theologians must persuade all the theologians of the Old Oriental Churches that the Orthodox teaching and the non-Chalcedonian ones are identical; they must persuade them that a common Christological formula is needed to include the non-Chalcedonian formulae and the Chalcedonian one and to emphasise the fact that a difference of terminological nature created the wrong impression that there is a Christological divergence between the two families of Churches.

In order to prove that the difference between the non-Chalcedonian Christology and the Chalcedonian one is only of terminological character, Father Stăniloae—just like Chițescu in his study—quotes a number of texts from the works of Severus of Antioch, demonstrating that this one never denied the

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[46] Ibid., 82.

[47] D. Stăniloae, "Posibilitatea reconcilierii dogmatice între Biserica Ortodoxă si Vechile Biserici Orientale," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1956): 5-27.

[48] Several theologians participated in the meeting of Aarhus on behalf of the Orthodox Churches, among whom G. Florovsky, J. Meyendorff, I. Karmiris, J. Romanides, V. Borovoy, N. Chițescu etc., and on behalf of the non-Chalcedonian Churches: Armenian Bishop Sarkissian, Armenian Archbishop Tiran Nersorian, Bishop Mar Dionysios of Malabar, V. C. Samuel, Coptic K. N. Khella.

[49] Stăniloae, "Posibilitatea reconcilierii dogmatice între Biserica Ortodoxă si Vechile Biserici Orientale," 7. Cf. review *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 1-2 (1969): 84-87.

existence of the two essences in Christ (divine and human), not using the word *nature* due to the reasons mentioned above. But, Father Stăniloae says that Severus however "declares that the divinity and humanity remain entirely unchanged in Him (Christ)".[50] And, in this sense, he quotes several texts from Severus' works, such as: "Christ is not divided, but taking into account the divine nature and the human nature, which remain entirely in their special notion, He is a single person, a single *hypostasis* and a single nature".[51] Or: "Christ Himself is Son and of the same essence with the One who begot Him and became, out of love, of the same essence with us, with no change".[52] Father Stăniloae points out, somewhere else, that Severus says: "The Word of God hypostatically united not only His body, but also His soul endowed with will and reason, in order to make our souls inclined to evil choose good and reject evil".[53] Father Stăniloae emphasises the fact that Severus does not speak of the existence of a single nature in Christ. He uses the term of "essence" (*ousia*) for what the Chalcedonians term "being", "nature" (*physis*), but he does not say that there is a single essence in Christ, but two, which persist in Christ.[54] He says there is a single nature in Christ, given the fact that he thought, just like the Alexandrians, that the full nature is always manifested personally. Therefore, if we said that two natures can be found in Christ, we would fall into Nestorianism. Out of caution, he uses the term *essence*, but without saying that which was assumed from the Virgin did no longer exist in the incarnate Logos, in other words, the human nature. Severus and the other non-Chalcedonians do not confuse the terms *being* and *hypostasis*, but sometimes use them with extreme care, while Severus uses the term *essence* instead of *nature* to avoid formulating a Nestorian Christology. Father Stăniloae concluded that "the divine essence and the human essence which according to Severus existed in Christ, are identical with the Chalcedonian 'natures'".[55] In other words, he was thinking just like the Chalcedonians, but he expressed himself with nuances which gave the impression of Monophysite formulations.

Father Stăniloae shows that, at the Fifth Ecumenical Council some formulations of the Confession of Emperor Justinian, taken by that Council as Orthodox *par excellence* and thus referential, are closer to, and sometimes identical with those of Severus; nevertheless, we say that Severus is considered a heretic, just as at the same Council Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa, recognised as Orthodox at the Fourth Ecumenical Council, were condemned as heretics at the Fifth Ecumenical Council. This shows that the Councils took over, explained and developed the teachings of the previous Councils, without having judged and

[50] Ibid., 19.

[51] Maurice Brière, "Les homélies cathédrales de Sévère d'Antioche," *Patrologia Orientalis*, tome.VIII (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1907), 225.

[52] Ibid., 233; apud Stăniloae, "Posibilitatea reconcilierii dogmatice între Biserica Ortodoxă si Vechile Biserici Orientale," 19.

[53] Ibid., Hom. 33, 416; Stăniloae, "Posibilitatea reconcilierii dogmatice între Biserica Ortodoxă si Vechile Biserici Orientale," 20.

[54] Ibid., eodem loco.

[55] Ibid., 21.

blamed the previous formulations (with some exceptions such as those mentioned above), and that there also was an evolution in the dogmatic formulation in the Church, which does not presuppose or impose the denial of the validity of the old formulae. On the contrary, the Holy Fathers took over the previous formulations and continued them, in the dialogue between the past and the present. Father Stăniloae thinks, according to this model, that one can act with a view to finding a common formula for expressing what he finds both at the Chalcedonians and at the non-Chalcedonians: the shared faith that Christ was not without body (οὐκ ἀσώματος), as Severus says, but that the divine Logos *hypostasis*ed in Him the human nature taken from the Holy Virgin, as Leontius of Byzantium says, the two natures, divine and human, having been united in Christ forever undivided and unseparated, unmixed and unchanged (as the Chalcedonian Orthodoxy affirms) which the non-Chalcedonians do not deny.

In this sense, Father Stăniloae says that "acknowledging the validity of the Chalcedonian definition, a more explicit formula should be established, just as the Second Ecumenical Council acknowledged the Nicene definition as valid and established on its basis, the Symbol of faith much more complete and in perfect equilibrium with the Trinitarian issue".[56] Father Stăniloae thinks that the possible union between the two families of Churches could not be done through imposing the formula adopted by one of the Churches on the other one, but through the joint re-formulation of the old formulae into a new one, according to the model of the Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council, into a formula including elements of the formulae adopted by each of the two families of Churches, to clarify what Chalcedon did not succeed in doing. In this sense, Father Stăniloae proposes such a formula which we quote here: "We confess One and the Same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, perfect in Divinity and perfect in humanity, true God and true man, the Same, with rational soul and body, of the same being with the Father according to Divinity and of one being with us according to humanity, like us in everything but with no sin, before all ages begotten from the Father according to Divinity and in due time born for us and for our salvation from Virgin Mary, Birth giver of God according to humanity; the One and the Same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten known *from* and *in* two natures, namely *from and in two essences*, unmixed, unchanged, undivided and unseparated, the difference of the natures or of the *essences* having not been abolished in any way because of the union, but rather preserving the property of each nature or essence and making up one person or *hypostasis*, or '*a nature of God the Word incarnate'* (God-the-Word assuming and keeping in His *hypostasis* the human nature in its integrity, unmixed and unchanged and unconfused and unseparated in union with His divine nature and making through Him unseparated and unconfused His theandric works, namely the human ones, in divine manner and the divine ones, with the participation of His humanity)".[57]

[56] Ibid., 26.

[57] Ibid., 26-27.

Stăniloae thinks that the italicised text or that between brackets may be omitted. As for the first part of the formula, this one includes a few expressions belonging to the non-Chalcedonian Christology (italicised). The insertion of these expressions in the definition from Chalcedon will protect it against any Nestorian interpretation, and the non-Chalcedonian expressions will be protected against any Monopohysite interpretation. The equilibrium of the Christological dogma, which inclines to exclusive unity in the non-Chalcedonian expressions, while in the definition from Chalcedon the dogma can create the impression that it inclines to a greater stress of duality, would thus find a more adequate expression.[58]

Having examined the dogmatic contents of the decisions passed at Aarhus, Bristol and Geneva, Father Stăniloae acknowledges the progress made by the theologians of the two Church families towards agreement on a joint formulation of the Christological dogma. He especially appreciated the agreement of Geneva, of which he stated: "The Geneva document, although it mentions that the two Church families may employ different terminologies, also takes a step further, by jointly undersigning certain phrases that go beyond the general agreement formulation of Aarhus and the insufficiently explicit phrases of the Bristol agreement, and comes closer to the phraseology of the Chalcedon Council. Thus, the Geneva document makes the following joint statement: 'in Him (Christ) *the two natures are united in a hypostasis of the divine Word*, without confusion, without change, without division and without separation' and states that the two parties agreed on St. Cyril's teaching on the hypostatic union of the two natures".[59] Father Stăniloae was very optimistic about the future of the upcoming dialogue between the Old Oriental Churches and the Orthodox Church. He saw the Geneva agreement as "the foundation for a full synthesis between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian terminology",[60] a synthesis that was never achieved at Chalcedon which resulted in a schism, but which could however be achieved through theological dialogue intended to regain the unity of the two Church families.

This was the point of view of a great Romanian dogmatist in regard to the perspective of the reconciliation of the non-Chalcedonians and Chalcedonians. It is a point of view he defended at the meetings he had with non-Chalcedonians theologians and hierarchs, as a member of the delegations of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Stăniloae noted that the non-Chalcedonian Churches had not changed their Christology in the meantime. This is why he warned the Orthodox theologians convened in the preparatory commission for the beginning of the theological dialogue with the Old Oriental Churches at Addis Ababa, that "we cannot ascribe to the non-Chalcedonians our own interpretations of their Christological doctrine. Based on these interpretations, we cannot consider them different from us in faith, as long as they declare they believe what we believe, or before asking them more exactly what they

[58] Ibid., 27.

[59] Stăniloae, "Acțiuni și poziții noi în eforturile de apropiere într Bisericile Ortodoxe și Bisericile Vechi Orientale," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1972): 114.

[60] Ibid., 115.

believe".[61] These are words that should be taken into account by the "zealots" (ζηλωτές) of Orthodoxy who, after signing the agreement on the identity of Christology professed both by the Chalcedonians and by the non-Chalcedonians (in 1993), continue to call "Monophysite" the Churches which, due to the reasons and circumstances known, have not accepted the decisions of Chalcedon, but whose Christological doctrine is as Orthodox as that of Chalcedonian Churches. It was not pastoral, liturgical or administrative matters that were invoked as grounds for the schism of 451, but *Christology*. The reason for schism disappears if we admit that the two families of Churches profess the same Christology. Once they recognize each other in the same Christology, the two families of Churches mutually acknowledge their Orthodoxy in the 1993 document. For this reason, since then non-Chalcedonian Churches have been rightly called Oriental Orthodox Churches.

*The Christology of the Rite of the Non-Chalcedonian Churches*

The Romanian theologians have also been interested in the rite of the non-Chalcedonian Churches, an important part of the life of any Church. Those who took special interest in the study of the rite of the non-Chalcedonian Churches were Professors Ene Branişte and Nicolae Necula (especially after 1970) of the Institute and Faculty of Theology of Bucharest.

In a first study[62] the Liturgics Professor Fr. Ene Branişte of the Theological Institute of Bucharest investigated the content of the rite and especially of that of the Liturgies of the Old Oriental Churches. He showed that the Liturgies of the Old Oriental Churches have the same sources as the Liturgies of Orthodox Churches. They have all evolved in different places and historical contexts. Hence there appeared a few differences which, as Rev. Branişte says, do not affect the essence of the rite. But Professor Branişte says: "Nothing of the specific character of the true Monophysitism (Eutychian) and Nestorianism, blamed by the Ecumenical Church, can be seen in the liturgical texts or in the external forms of this rite".[63]

Far from finding Monophysite elements in the Liturgies of the non-Chalcedonians, Branişte makes us understand that, on the contrary, we can see a true stress on dyophysitism in some texts of these Liturgies. In the Armenian Liturgy the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol was slightly altered with reference to the Saviour, saying: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-Begotten of the Father, of the same nature of *the Father*, *God of God* (...) etc. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and *was incarnate*, *was made man*, *was born perfectly of the Holy Virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit*, *by whom He took body*, *soul and mind and everything that is in man*, *truly and not in semblance* (...) *He ascended to heaven*

[61] Stăniloae, "Perspectivele dialogului cu Bisericile Vechi Orientale. Lucrările comisiei interortodoxe de la Addis-Ababa," *Biserica Ortodoxă Română* 9-10 (1971): 989.

[62] E. Branişte, "Cultul Bisericilor Crestine Vechi din Orient, Liturghiile riturilor orientale," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1965): 83-131.

[63] Ibid., 87.

*with the same body* (...)" It is useless to add how well this addition expresses and stresses the Orthodox faith in the fullness of the human nature of the Lord and thus, the existence of the two natures in the one person of Christ, God-the-Man.[64]

The same dyophysitism is expressed in the *Trisagion* hymn, to which in the Armenian Liturgy "who was crucified for us" is added, and the Coptic Liturgy enriched with formulations which show beyond doubt that the Egyptians are not Monophysites. This hymn says as follows: "Holy God, *the One who was born by a Virgin*, Holy Almighty, The One who was crucified on the Cross for us, Holy immortal, the One who rose from the dead for us, have mercy on us!" And, after "Glory (...) and now (...)" the Trinitarian invocation "Holy Trinity, have mercy on us"[65] is added. The Copts distinguish in this hymn between the Christological and the Trinitarian parts.

Unfortunately, certain Chalcedonians accused these additions of being theopaschite expressions, refusing to see them as obvious forms of the fact that in the highest form of the worship of the Old Oriental Churches, just like ours, in the Divine Liturgy, there is no form of Monophysitism whatsoever. With the non-Chalcedonians, the *Trisagion* hymn, maybe identical with ours before Chalcedon, evolved towards a Christological understanding, as the Coptic version also shows, which is not bad at all; if the Son of God was crucified for our sake, this means he had a human nature. The non-Chalcedonians may have inserted these additions into the *Trisagion* version prior to the Chalcedon Council, precisely in order to stress that God suffered for us in his human nature. Regrettably, ill-meaning "Orthodox" immediately saw this as theopaschism. In order to assert the Trinitarian significance of the same hymn, in the Coptic liturgy it ends with a Trinitarian invocation. The Church fought for the right faith to provide us with the right worship, the right adoration of God. The *Trisagion* hymn of the non-Chalcedonian Churches affirms the right worship and, especially the right faith. It is not fair to say—having learned about the *Trisagion* of the Coptic Liturgy—that those who celebrate this Liturgy are Monophysites. Fr. Braniște pointed out in another study the fact that the Orthodoxy of the prayers and hymns of the Armenian Liturgy, as well as of some other religious services, was recognised as far back as the 9th century by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople.[66]

One of the Romanian scholars who studied in a non-Chalcedonian Church was the future Liturgics professor of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of Bucharest, Father Nicolae D. Necula. In 1974 the young theologian Necula defended his doctoral thesis in Theology on the "Doctrine and Religious Life of the Coptic Church, as reflected in its liturgical texts (prayers and hymns)" published in 1976 and re-published in 2014. He also published other studies on the theology and liturgical life of the Coptic Church. Necula would publish in his

[64] Ibid., 96.

[65] Ibid., 112.

[66] Idem, "Bazele liturgice comune între Biserica Armeană și Biserica Ortodoxă Română," *Ortodoxia* 2 (1973): 260. The author gives text references of Patriarch Photius. It is the answer Photius gave to Catholicos Zaccharia I of the Armenians.

doctoral thesis texts from older and newer theologies of the Coptic Church proving the dyophysitism of the Coptic Christology. Following the example set by Father Branişte, his disciple Necula presented many texts from all the liturgical books of the Coptic Church proving that the dyophysitism (not Monophysitism) professed by the Coptic theologians is reflected in the way the Copts pray. "This teaching", Rev. N. Necula said in his thesis, "abounds especially in the Book of the year's psalmody, where the humanity of the Saviour, His Incarnation from the Virgin Mary, the reality of His body and the cycle of His earthly life are proclaimed in lots of places: "God-the-Word was incarnate in you, o, Most Pure One", "You gave Him your body and blood". "God-the-Word, who was incarnate from you and ascended like incense to God, His Father. 'The Word of the Father came and was incarnate from you' (...) Jesus Christ (...) incarnate in you, without change, with a rational body, fully consubstantial with us and has an intellectual soul. He remained God according to His being and was made perfect man".[67]

Having proved that, according to the texts of its liturgical books, the Coptic Church does not profess Monophysitism, Necula drew the following conclusion: "As for the Christological issue or the teaching on the person of Christ, the Copts confess the same faith, but express it in a different terminology. They blamed and still blame the exaggerated Monophysitism of Eutyches, but did not admit the dogmatic definition of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, for fear of falling into Nestorianism. Cyril's formula "a single incarnate nature of God-the-Word", to which they remained faithful, is an Orthodox formula, because in reality, the Copts recognise two natures in Jesus Christ".[68]

Necula continued to study the theology and life of the Coptic Church for thirty years, publishing studies on this topic and being a member of the delegations of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the joint commissions of dialogue with the non-Chalcedonian Churches. About the theological dialogues of the Orthodox Churches with the other Churches, Fr. Necula wrote in a study published in 2005, republished in 2014, that "of all the theological dialogues, the most stable, serious and fruitful turned out to be the one between the Orthodox Church and the Old Oriental Orthodox Churches".[69]

This was confirmed in the fact that the official dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the non-Chalcedonian Churches began in 1985, after four official meetings (1985, 1989, 1990, 1993), resulted in the *agreement of faith and proposals for annulling the anathemas*, in spite of the fact that some Churches like the Russian Church, Church of Greece and Mount Athos had some reservations about the Orthodoxy of the Christology of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. Necula was a member of the working sub-committees (met in 1995 and 1997) which discussed and would discuss the issues related to the

[67] Nicolae D. Necula, *Doctrina si viata religioasă ale Bisericii Copte, reflectate în textele ei liturgice (rugăciuni si imne)*, second edition (Bucharest: Perenesis, 2014), 120-121.

[68] Ibid., 229.

[69] Idem, "Relatiile dintre Biserica Ortodoxă si Biserica Ortodoxă Veche Orientală," *Studii de Teologie liturgică* (2014): 180-181.

annulment of the anathemas between the two families of Churches in regard to rite and pastoral service.

Fr. Necula, one of the Romanian theologians who knew the life and theology of the Coptic Church better than any other Romanian theologian, wrote the most about the non-Chalcedonian Churches, preparing the later generations of Romanian theologians to understand in an authentic way the theology and life of our sister Churches, unjustly called *Monophysite* for centuries on end. Another Romanian theologian who wrote about the theology of the non-Chalcedonian Churches is Nicolae Dura, who studied at Addis Ababa. A specialist in Law, he was not a member of the delegations of our Church in the dialogue with non-Chalcedonian Churches given the fact that in this dialogue issues with canonical character were not discussed. He did, however, write widely about these Churches.[70]

*Conclusions*

We have hereby presented some of the studies of the Romanian theologians who addressed the Christology of the non-Chalcedonian Churches, the formal cause of the separation of 451. These are the studies of the Romanian theologians with greatest authority in the second half of the 20th century. They thought and wrote with competence and seriousness about the Christology of the non-Chalcedonian Churches. Due to their work and to some other people's work also and belonging to the Orthodox Churches, at present no serious Orthodox theologian can say, and has no right to say, that the Orthodox Oriental Churches could be Monophysite. This is the position of the theological schools of the Romanian Patriarchate as well.[71] The signing of the doctrinal agreement of 1993 concerning the mutual recognition of Orthodoxy by the two families of Churches is one positive point. The Orthodox must understand the fact that it is not enough that we recognise the Orthodoxy of the non-Chalcedonians, but that they also recognise ours. This has been achieved due to all those who worked in this regard within their Churches.

As for the condition imposed by some Orthodox that the non-Chalcedonians should formally accept the other Ecumenical Councils, the issue must be raised in a more nuanced way. The following Councils (the fifth and the sixth) continued to clarify the Christological formula, so that the Orthodoxy of the Christology of the Chalcedonian Churches could be the one the non-Chalcedonian accept today. The Seventh Ecumenical Council debated issues the non-Chalcedonians outside the Byzantine Empire were not faced with. But all the Councils were designed to establish the *Orthodoxy* of the Orthodox Churches accepted today by the Orthodox Oriental Churches.[72]

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[70] See his thesis (1977) on the canonical organisation of the Ethiopian Church published in Bucharest in 1990 (Organizarea Bisericii etiopiene și bazele ei canonice); and other articles on this topic (in Romanian reviews).

[71] See the Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church of December 1994.

[72] Antonie, Metropolitan of Transylvania, "Dialogul dintre Biserica Ortodoxă si Biserica Ortodoxă Vechi-Orientală," *Ortodoxia* 1 (1994): 143.

With or without the seven Ecumenical Councils formally recognised by the two families of Churches, what is important for their unity is their mutual recognition of Orthodoxy: Orthodox Churches acknowledge the present Orthodoxy of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, without requiring a formal acknowledgement of the last four Ecumenical Councils, while in their turn the Oriental Orthodox Churches acknowledge the present Orthodoxy of the Orthodox Church, without requiring her to renounce the last four Councils, which actually impart her the Orthodoxy now acknowledged by the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

This was affirmed by the members of the Joint Commission of dialogue during the latest meeting of dialogue between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians. Held at Chambésy, between 1 and 6 November 1993, the two delegations signed the dogmatic agreement between the two families of Orthodox Churches. It was not pastoral, liturgical or administrative matters, but *Christology* that accounted for the schism of 451. Mutual recognition of the Orthodox character of Christology would abolish the cause that led to the Churches' separation in 451.

Metropolitan Antonie of Transylvania of blessed memory participated on behalf of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the signing of this agreement. On 12-14 January 1994, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church approved the conclusions of the 1993 Commission.[73] Professor Ioan Caraza of the Faculty of Theology in Bucharest wrote that after this Christological agreement in 1993, the two families of Churches seem to have had no real theological reason to remain separated as they recognise that both are Orthodox in all ways.[74] Unfortunately, later on, a group of Orthodox people emerged who challenged the agreement signed in 1993. They are few, superficial, but aggressive. They do not represent the spirit of Orthodoxy. The serious theologians like those whose names and works are presented above and their disciples do not exclude the presence of the ill-willed ones, of the ignorant, and of the propagandists of hatred where sincere love should be spread instead. It has always been like that in history.

The major decisions of the Ecumenical Councils had opponents and adversaries. The Church continued along the path of truth. The truth of Orthodoxy is one, preached by competent and responsible persons, not by people hating truth. The Orthodox theologians in dialogue with the non-Chalcedonians took into account the truth which they confessed and still confess, not the interpretations of certain Orthodox people who do not care about the truth confessed by the other, but rather what they think is the truth other people experienced, but refusing the recognition of their real truth.

Once the reason for separation disappears, separation disappears too. However, the consequences of fifteen centuries of separation endure. There are wounds that need to be healed. First, however, what must be healed are the *mindsets formed and deformed* throughout this period and across various ecclesial

[73] *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, 1-6 (1994): 264.

[74] Ion Caraza, *Hristologia sinodului IV ecumenic de la Calcedon în preocupările teologilor romano-catoloci și protestanți din vremea noastră și punctulde vedere ortodox* (Episcopiei Sloboziei și Călărașilor, 2000), 207.

contexts. It will not be easy, but this healing will enable effective, practical communion between the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

Until the unity *in sacris*, the Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox Oriental ones still have to discuss and sort out some other issues outside Christology. Chalcedon did not address the issues of rite and of pastoral service, but of Christology. Or, from the point of view of Christology, the situation is clear now. It is worth mentioning the contribution of the theologians during the second half of the last century, belonging to the two families of Churches (participating directly in the unofficial or official theological dialogue), as well as of some outstanding hierarchs who admit the Orthodox character of the Christology both of the non-Chalcedonian and of the Chalcedonian Churches.

The authority of the Romanian theology professors whose studies we used above is not challenged in Romania. All of them are known to other Orthodox Churches as well. We have presented their points of view and of the great Patriarch Justinian Marina, so that those tempted not to believe what our non-Chalcedonian brethren confess should learn from the high competence, erudition, decency and wisdom of the people such as those whose studies we mentioned above, great theologians and servants of the Church.

They explained to us that the Oriental Orthodox Churches are not Monophysite, but Orthodox. Orthodox theologians as great as those quoted above, greatly contributed to the correct perception of the Orthodoxy of Orthodox Oriental Churches by the theologians signing the doctrinal agreement in 1993. This agreement requires a process of reception by each family of Churches. And within them, it depends on the degree of meta-noia (the extent and quality of mind-set revision) with which the members of one Church meet their brethren in the other Church family. And the quality of this change in our minds/mind-sets depends on the extent to which we are open to the workings of the Spirit of God, and not the spirit of the world or any other spirit.

# The Role of Pictures, the Veneration of Icons and the Representation of Christ in the Oriental Orthodox Churches[1]

*Christine Chaillot*

In September 1990, in the Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches approved by the Joint Commission of the Official Theological Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches in Chambésy (Geneva), it was stated that: "In relation to the teaching of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of the Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox agree that the theology and practice of the veneration of icons taught by that Council are in basic agreement with the teaching and practice of the Oriental Orthodox from ancient times, long before the convening of the Council, and that we have no disagreement in this regard".[2]

In 1993, I published a book on this topic entitled *Rôle des images et vénération des icônes dans les Eglises orthodoxes orientales*, with a Foreword by Metropolitan Damaskinos, then Co-President of the Dialogue.

In my book I then proved that: 1) there exist pictures, wall paintings, illuminations and icons with representations of Christ, of the Virgin and of the Saints in all the Oriental Orthodox Churches of the Coptic, Syriac, Armenian and Ethiopian rites; 2) in all these Oriental Orthodox Churches, icons are venerated. With this aim in mind, I made a short demonstration of the four traditions throughout the centuries, since the beginning of Christianity until today, with a presentation of different texts of these traditions through their history, lives of Saints, accounts of travellers,[3] etc. Many of such texts are translated into our western languages.[4]

*Icons, Paintings and Art History*

First of all, what can be said in a few words about art history? What follows are some indications about the most ancient paintings/icons/illuminations kept in the four traditions. It must be underscored that many paintings and icons, being fragile, have not resisted time or have been destroyed, for example by Muslims (being iconoclast) such as the Ommayad Calif Yezid II, who promulgated in 721

[1] This article initially was a lecture given during the Meeting of the Association Dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox at the Institute of Theology of Saint-Serge in Paris, on November 19, 2013.

[2] Cf. *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. C. Chaillot (Geneva, 1998), 63-4.

[3] For example Vansleb, who visited Coptic churches and monasteries in the 17th century.

[4] See for example the *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalis* [CSCO] and the *Patrologia Orientalis* [PO].

an edict ordaining the destruction of all the Christian paintings; or during the invasion by Ahmed Gragn (1527-1543) in Ethiopia in the 16th century.

In the Syriac art, one finds more paintings than icons on wood. The most ancient illuminations are found in the Rabula Gospel dated 586.[5]

We know that many Armenian churches of the 7th century were decorated with wall paintings, some fragments of which are still kept. For the previous centuries (4th-5th), only some traces are kept. Among the most important ancient paintings preserved until today we can name those of the churches of Lmbat, Aroutj and Talin, of the 7th century, as well as those of Tatev and Aghtamar which are the best preserved (Church of the Holy Cross, Lake of Van, 10th c.).[6] The most ancient illuminated Armenian manuscript is that of the Gospel of Queen Mlke (862) of Vaspourakan (Lake of Van). In the 13th century, a very famous Armenian iconographer, Toros Roslin, painted many illuminations in the scriptorium school he headed in the monastery of Hromkla in Cilicia (southeast of present Turkey).

In Egypt, wall paintings of the 6th-8th centuries have been preserved, such as those of Bawit and Saqqarah. The most ancient Coptic icon known today, representing Christ and Abbot Menas, dated to the 7th century, is kept in the Louvre Museum.[7] In the Coptic manuscripts, we find illuminations of which the most ancient go back to the 9th-10th centuries. Among the most beautiful and ancient icons to be seen in Egypt, let us name those of the churches in Old Cairo, in the Coptic Museum and in the monasteries.[8]

In Ethiopia, many pieces of art were destroyed in particular during Gragn's attack in the 16th century, and also before. The two most ancient illuminated manuscripts known today have recently been definitely assigned to the late 5th-early 7th centuries by radiocarbon analysis: the two Gospels of the Monastery of Abuna Garima, near Axum.[9] The most ancient wall paintings may be dated to the 11th-12th centuries (church of Yemrehanna Krestos) and the most ancient preserved icon has been dated to the 15th century (Virgin and Child by Fere Tseyon "The Fruit of Sion", of the Monastery of Daga Estifanos in Lake Tana).[10]

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[5] The paintings of the churches in Tur Abdin (Turkey) have disappeared. Paintings of the Middle Ages can still be admired: in Syria in the Monastery of Mar Mousa and in Sadad (near Homs); and also in Egypt in the Monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi al Natroun. See also Sebastian Brock "The Arts: architecture, wall painting and manuscript illustration," in *The Hidden Pearl. The Syriac Orthodox Church and its ancient Aramaic heritage. Vol. II. The Heirs of the Ancient Aramaic Heritage* (Rome 2001), 209-241.

[6] In the Armenian churches in Aleppo, Jerusalem, in Romania and Bulgaria, for example, more icons/paintings can be seen as local production was abundant. In the new cathedral of Saint Gregory in Erevan finished in 2001, the young Armenian iconographer was more inspired by Byzantine iconography than by Armenian.

[7] It was found in Middle Egypt, in the ruins of the Monastery of Bawit excavated since 1900 by the French archeologist Jean Clédat.

[8] The contemporary Coptic iconography follows the research made by Isaac Fanous (d. 2007), who was a student of L. Ouspensky in Paris.

[9] http://www.ethiopianheritagefund.org/ (last accessed June, 2016).

[10] In Ethiopia, in the monasteries and churches, ancient icons are kept in the "treasure house".

*Icons on Wood*

Icons painted on wood are found especially in the Coptic and Ethiopian traditions, but also in the Syriac and Armenian ones. In the Armenian tradition, in the Letter by Movsès/Moise of Khoren (5th c.), a miraculous icon of the Mother of God is mentioned, "a wooden icon painted by (the Apostle) John", an icon which is "a medical healer for the faithful", on which is "printed the power of the Trinity". This icon would have been brought by the Apostle Bartholomew to the Armenian monastery of Hogeats Vank (south of the Lake of Van) where it remained for numerous centuries, before probably being brought to Constantinople. This icon was very popular, according to John Sarkawag (12th c.).[11]

If it is true that there are not as many pictures/paintings in the Armenian churches as in the churches of the Byzantine tradition, we must say that they are to be seen in all the Armenian churches, and even sometimes in great number as for example in the Armenian cathedrals in Jerusalem and Aleppo. Icons/pictures and paintings are always found at the entrance of the churches, on the walls, on the altar (the Virgin and Christ) and on top of the baptistery (Baptism of Christ). Many illuminations can be seen in the ancient Armenian manuscripts, often similar to the Byzantine iconography.

In the Syrian Orthodox tradition, there are paintings in all the churches. The number of illuminations in the ancient manuscripts is important.

*What Are the Words Used to Refer to "Icon" and "Picture" in the Traditions of the Oriental Orthodox Churches?*

In the Coptic tradition, the Coptic word is "limni"; that borrowed from Greek is "eikon", and that taken from Arabic (coming from Greek) is "iquna". In Ethiopia, the Geez word is "se'el"; the word "ayqunâ" is also found. In Syriac, they say "youkno" for icon and "sourto" for picture. In Armenian, they use the words sourp/sourb and badger/patker (that is in western Armenian and in Eastern Armenian languages) to designate a holy picture.

*The Mandylion*

The mandylion is considered a kind of prototype of the icon of Christ: it is the picture of Christ which was brought from Jerusalem to King Abgar in Edessa, the ancient capital of Syriac culture. What follows is a text written by Abu Nasr Yahya ibn Jarir (11th c.), a Syrian Orthodox medical doctor born in Tikrit (present Iraq): "When the Greeks took the city of Edessa from the Muslims, they found a folded veil laid between two bricks under the altar of the great church (cathedral) of Edessa (...) All this was taken and brought to Constantinople where it is found in the great church of Agia Sofia. Myself I have seen them in the year 450 of the Arabs (1058) and I have venerated them".[12] According to the

[11] See the letter by Moise of Khoren (5th c.) to Prince Sahak Ardzrouni in "L'histoire de l'icône de Hogeats Vank" by Thamar Dasnabedian, *Handes Amsorya* (Vienna, 1993).

[12] Al Mursid, chapter 35, "Des autres prescriptions de la prière," Ms Charfet 5/5 in P. Hindo, *Disciplina antiochena antiqua* (Vatican 1943), 312-314.

famous art historian Jules Leroy: "The mandylion is the essential argument for those who accuse the Syriac Churches of iconoclast mentality".[13] According to André Grabar, this picture "not made by human hands" proves, better than any other argument, that the representation of Christ is legitimate".[14] The mandylion is known and mentioned in the texts of the four Oriental Orthodox Churches and is venerated there by the faithful.

*The Icons /Representations of Christ/ of His festivals: Themes and Iconographical Canons*

In the four traditions of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, Christ is represented on all the icons of the main festivals to tell the principal episodes of his life in the liturgical year. Christ is often represented with the Virgin who presents Him to the faithful as being the Saviour of the world.[15] Universal as well as local Saints are also represented. In the Oriental Orthodox Churches the iconographical themes as well as iconographical canons are similar to those of the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Regarding Ethiopian iconography, according to Jules Leroy, Ethiopia, which was evangelized by Syrians and Egyptians, also developed links with Byzantium, following their iconographical canons, while maintaining a proper character being not Byzantino-Oriental, nor African.[16]

Some illustrations/illuminations/icons reproduce local life, for example on the Ethiopian icons of the representation of the Flight to Egypt which shows an Ethiopian family travelling and carrying its local utensils (baskets, pots, gourds).

According to the Copt Abu al Barakat (14th c.), the Fathers gave symbolic signs to the pictures: the nimbus, the position of the fingers, etc.[17] New icons may be painted.[18]

*Style of the Icons. Oriental Orthodox Iconographical Canons of Paintings and Illuminations. Copies of Byzantine Models*

According to Vrt'anes, the Armenians did not know how to paint pictures but they were brought from the Greeks and the Armenian kings gave the order to

[13] J. Leroy, *Les manuscrits syriaques à peintures* (Paris, 1964), 39.

[14] André Grabar, *La Sainte Face de Laon*: *le Mandylion dans l'art orthodoxe* (Prague: Seminarium Kondakovianum 1931), 26.

[15] In the texts of the prayers of the Oriental Orthodox Churches to bless/consecrate the icons, it is repeated that salvation is the aim of Christian life. In the Ethiopian tradition many churches are dedicated to the Saviour of the world, "Medhane Alem".

[16] "Ethiopian Paintings in the Middle Ages," in G. Gerster, *Churches in Rock*. *Early Christian Art in Ethiopia* (London: Phaidon 1970), 62.

[17] "Sur l'emploi des images, des icônes et des chants", the 24th chapter of his liturgical encyclopedia, *La Lampe des Ténèbres pour éclairer l'intelligence du service liturgique*.

[18] For example, after twenty one Copts were beheaded by Islamists in Libya in February 2015, they were recognized as martyrs by the Coptic Orthodox Church and an icon representing them was painted. On 24 April 2015, when the Armenian Church recognized the martyrs of the 1915 genocide, a large icon/picture was presented, consecrated with myron and venerated by the present bishops during the ceremony.

have pictures painted in their churches.[19] In Ethiopia, we know that icons were sent and brought back from Jerusalem and Egypt.[20] Some pictures and stamps were brought from western Europe, for example that of the Virgin and Child of the Church of Saint Mary the Greater in Rome, an image of Byzantine type which was one of the prototypes of the icons of the Virgin in Ethiopia.[21] Sometimes Greek painters were mandated to paint icons for the Oriental Orthodox Churches. This demonstrates that contacts continued to exist between the two families of Churches in daily life and throughout the centuries. For example, the icon of Evangelist Saint Mark, which was ordered by the Copts to be painted by a Greek, Stephanos Therianos, for the Church of the Muhalaqah in Old Cairo, and which is painted and signed by him. In Egypt, we find iconostases painted by Greeks for and in Coptic Orthodox churches, for example in the Church of Saint Mark (the ancient cathedral in Klut Bey in Cairo (19th c.) and in the cathedral in Port Said. Art and iconography of the Oriental Orthodox Churches have been influenced at times by the Byzantine tradition and also by other traditions (post-Renaissance western influence, style sometimes Italian/Catholic). In principle, one must meditate and pray before painting icons. Icons are often painted by monks and nuns and even priests. According to the Ethiopian priest Kesa of Gondar (1932), one must meditate and pray in order to paint.[22]

*Where Are the Icons Placed?*

Icons are visible in the churches where they are mainly placed on the walls, on a lutrin and also inside the sanctuary and on the altar. The clergy censes the icons during liturgical offices and festivals. In the homes one may see icons as well, but this is very rare for ancient icons which are very precious. The faithful own reproductions of icons, mainly printed on paper as this is the most economical way to buy them. A certain number of icons and of illuminations of ancient manuscripts are kept in museums (for example in Cairo, in Addis Ababa, in Etchmiadzin and Antelias, etc.).

*Vows Made in Front of the Icons. Miraculous Icons*

In front of icons, the faithful make vows, especially if the icon is known to be miraculous.[23] Thus, in front of certain icons, women come and pray in order to have a child. Through the intermediary of the icons of saints, God can operate healings. Through the prayer of intercession of those represented, certain icons

[19] See S. Der Nersessian, *Une Apologie des Images au VII^e siècle*, Etudes byzantines et arméniennes, t. 1 (Louvain, 1973), 393. She also quotes famous icons of Byzantium, such as the one brought by Ashot Patrik (7th c.) in the Armenian church of Dariunk.

[20] See the writings by Diana Spencer about miraculous icons in Ethiopia of typically Byzantine style, "In Search of Saint Luke Icons," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 10, 2 (1972): 71-72.

[21] http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salus_populi_romani (last accessed, June 2016); see also articles and books by S. Chojnacki.

[22] Jacques Mercier, *Le roi Salomon et les maîtres du regard* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux 1992), 145.

[23] We still know examples of miraculous icons nowadays in the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

perform miracles. In Ethiopia, miraculous icons are carried in procession outside the church at the time of scourges such as drought or epidemics, such as plague in the old days.

Where miraculous icons are found, pilgrimages are organised. For example, south of Van, the Monastery of Hogeats Vank was well-known for its famous miraculous icon of the Mother of God and thus became an important place of pilgrimage. Let us also mention the icon of the Armenians called of the Holy Saviour which was brought by Ashot Bagratouni (688-703) from Constantinople to Darvink where he caused a church to be built dedicated to the icon.

In Egypt, south of Louxor, in the Monastery of Saint Georges, is found a miraculous icon of this saint which is deeply venerated. There is an important pilgrimage lasting one week which precedes the feast of Saint George, on 16 November.

*Did the Oriental Orthodox Churches Participate in the Iconoclast Byzantine Quarrel?*

Now comes the question: did the Oriental Orthodox Churches participate in the iconoclast Byzantine quarrel? The most ancient Armenian treatise against the iconoclasts was written by an Armenian scholar monk, Vrt'anes K'ert'ogh, the assistant of Catholicos Moise, who also led the patriarchal affairs during an interregnum, and thus represented the official position of the Armenian Church.[24] According to Sirarpie Der Nersessian (d. 1989), a great specialist of Armenian and Byzantine art, the Council of Nicea II would have considered certain so-called "monophysites" such as Severus of Antioch and Philoxenos of Mabbug as being adversaries of pictures, but we have no direct testimony to justify this.[25] The Syrian Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo, Yohanna Ibrahim, wrote that the Syrian Orthodox never participated in the Byzantine iconoclast quarrel and that they are not responsible for its inception.[26] The same can be said of the Copts and of the Ethiopians. As for the Armenians, they have known iconoclast movements, with the sects of the Paulicians and the Tondrakians, but which were repressed by the official Church. For example, at the end of the 7th century, the Paulicians, iconoclasts, were fought by the Catholicos John of Odsun in his treatise "Against the Paulicians".[27]

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[24] In this Treatise, he answered certain Armenian sects which were opposed to the representation of pictures in the churches. See Nersessian, *Une Apologie des Images au VII*e *siècle*, 379-388.

[25] Nersessian, "Une Apologie des images au VII[e] siècle," 389, 401. According to Sebastian Brock, the great specialist of Syriac studies, Philoxenus has not expressed iconoclastic opinions, see his "Iconoclasm and the monophysites," in *Iconoclasm*, *papers given at the ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, *University of Birmingham March 1975* ed. Antony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, Eng.: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1977), 54.

[26] See his articles "The Syrian Orthodox and Iconoclasm," *Patriarchal Review of the Patriarchate of Antioch*, Damascus, 171 (January 1980); 172 (February 1980); 173 (March 1980); 174 (April 1980), (in Arabic).

[27] According to S. Der Nersessian *Une Apologie des Images au VII*e *siècle*. See also Catholicos John of Osdun, *Complete Works* (Venice, 1833), 34, 39 (in Armenian).

*Practise of the Veneration of Icons: Veneration, not Adoration of Icons*

In front of icons, the Oriental Orthodox faithful light candles; they touch and kiss the icons; they pray in front of the icons, standing or kneeling. They even prostrate themselves in front of icons, especially if they are associated with miracles.

During the great festivals (Palm Sunday, Easter etc), processions are made inside and outside the churches with the icon of the feast. The faithful pray and sing in front of the icons; the priests offer incense to the icons during certain offices. The Coptic faithful, and other Oriental Orthodox, keep small pictures of Christ, the Virgin or a saint in their purses, their bags or on the windows of their cars, as a kind of protection.

One must venerate icons, not adore them. Here are some examples given by the texts.

In the Coptic tradition, Abu al Barakat (d. 1324) writes that people prostrate themselves in front of icons, but never adore them.

In the Ethiopian tradition, under King Susneyos (17th c.) lived a holy nun, Walatta Petros. In the church of Saint Fasiladas in Meselie, she spent all her nights until dawn standing in front of the icon of the Virgin, straight as a column and without leaning on the wall or the pillasters; and she prayed and supplicated for the salvation of her soul and of all, without rest (...) Another time, being very sick, she made a prayer in front of the icon of the Virgin asking for her intercession and the picture spoke to her.[28] George of Sagla shed tears in front of the icon of the Virgin in the Monastery of Saint Estifanos at Lake Hayq; while prostrating and fasting he saw his prayer being granted.[29] In the Acts of the holy monk Za Yohannes (middle of the 14th c.) the founder of the monastery of Kebran in Lake Tana, it is said that his parents prostrated themselves in front of the icon of the Virgin to have a child. Being adult, Yohanes prayed in a countryside church dedicated to the Virgin; from her icon she addressed him and told him to become a monk in the Monastery of Debre Libanos.

In the Syriac tradition, Patriarch Mar Ignatius Zakka I (d. 2014) told me that, during festivals, in his hometown of Mosul, it was the custom to have a deacon going from house to house holding an icon covered with silver, that of the Virgin or of a saint, in order to kiss it and to venerate it.

In the Armenian tradition, the cross is more venerated than the pictures, but without rejecting pictures or icons. According to Vrt'anes Kertogh (end 6th-beg. 7th c.), people prostrate themselves in front of the icons of Christ, not because of the colours but because of Christ in the Name of Whom they were painted. (...) "We know the invisible through what is visible" and "it is clear that since their origin pictures were made to honour and venerate the divine glory". The Armenian Ananias of Sanahin (11th c.) accepted the veneration of pictures of Christ, the apostles and the saints, on the condition of them not being adored.[30]

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[28] Vita di Walatta Petros, CSCO 316, 6

[29] Vie de Georges de Sagla, CSCO 493, 82.

[30] S. der Nersessian, "Image Worship in Armenia and its opponents," in Idem *Etudes Byzantines et Arméniennes*, vol. 1 (Louvain, 1973), 411.

*Icons. Pictures and Spirituality. Function of Icons*

All these pictures/icons play the same role as in the Byzantine world. For example: as protection; to think of winning Heaven; to be ocular testimonies of Christ's life; to get closer to God; to remember represented models of saints and to ask for their intercession with God.

For those who cannot read, pictures and paintings allow those who see them to receive religious education by communicating to the faithful the teachings of Christ, Church history, the Acts of the Apostles, the lives of the saints, the Holy Bible, as in a book of pictures. Pictures have inestimable value for Christian education, above all for that of children. A religious painting can guide the believer towards spiritual life and salvation, towards the Invisible. The aim is above all paedagogical and spiritual: to instruct those who cannot read to remain firm in faith, to sacrifice themselves if necessary. The pictures of saints, and especially of martyrs, are models of giving oneself to God. They help to encourage and strengthen the faithful, above all the tepid ones. Their representation incites one to meditation, to communion with the saints, in the hope of divine reward. This is why the Oriental Orthodox faithful wish to look at icons, because, through these "windows", they contemplate the World which is behind time and space, as wrote the Coptic Father Tadros Malaty.[31] For Matta al Maskin, the aim is "to touch the faith of the faithful in order to help them to pray". For Pope Shenouda III, it is the didactic impact which is important: "An icon can produce an effect deeper on the soul than a reading or a sermon".[32]

The aim expressed by the Coptic prayer of consecration is the following: by praying in front of the picture, the faithful ask for their salvation and forgiveness from God. It is the example of repentance and conversion given by Mary the Egyptian who prayed in front of the icon of the Mother of God before being able to enter the church of the Holy Sepulchre. For her, the icon played a role of "comfort", in order to obtain "grace and kindness from God, the Friend of humankind", as it is written in the Coptic Orthodox Synaxary.

*The Prayer to Consecrate/Bless the Icons*

Before venerating the icons, lighting candles and prostrating in front of them, they are consecrated by a bishop with holy oil (*myron*), except in the Syrian Orthodox Church which uses simple holy oil instead of myron. The prayers used are found in the books of the prayers of consecration of the bishops which can be found in English and which I have published in French.[33]

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[31] Tadros Malaty, *The Church House of God* (Alexandria: St. George Orthodox Church, Sporting 1994), 286.

[32] Pope Shenouda, *Comparative Theology* (London: Coptic Orthodox Publishers Association 1988), 174.

[33] See *Towards Unity*, 88-102. For a short translation in English of the Syriac prayer see *Anaphoras. The Book of the Divine Liturgies*, edited and published by Metropolitan Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel (Lodi: Archbishop of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the United States of America and Canada, 1991), 467-470. See the Armenian prayer in the *Great Mashtotz* translated into English by Father Mesrob Semerjian, New York, 1953, 104-112. The Coptic Prayer was translated into English

These texts of prayers are another proof of the existence and of the veneration of icons and images in the Oriental Orthodox Churches. In fact, such prayers for consecrating/blessing the icons would not exist if there were no icon or wall painting to be blessed!

*Theology of Icon*

The Armenian Father Daniel Kochakian[34] thinks that a theology of icons is already expressed in the Treaty of Vrt'anes (end 6th-beg. 7th c.) in which it is underlined that Armenian Christians do not adore the matter (the colours) but rather the One who is represented on the picture, Christ. On the other hand, always according to Vrt'anes, in order to convince oneself in regard to the veneration of pictures, it is enough to examine the Scriptures and not to consider the Incarnate Christ as an appearance, which is what Manicheans and Marcionites are doing. According to Father Kochakian, famous Armenians have been allowed to develop a theology of pictures/icons, in the context of the Incarnation. For example, at the beginning of the 12th century, Yovhannes Sarkawag, the hygumen of the Monastery of Haghpat, explained in his Treatise that adoration and prostration are offered to God alone. He also writes that, by venerating images, the faithful become closer to God, because only Christ is adored and not the matter.

Also in the 12th century, Catholicos Nerses repeats that in front of the picture of Christ, we adore not the matter, but Christ who is the image of the invisible God; and "if we despise the pictures, we also despise the ones who are figured there";[35] and that "the ignorants who insult the pictures have been anathemised by the Armenian Church".

Cyril of Alexandria suggested the idea according to which the icon allows the *hypostasis* of the Word to become visible, a formula which will be developed by Saint Theodore Studite.[36] In the Coptic Church, in the Middle Ages, according to Severus ibn al-Muqaffa, bishop of Achmounein in the 10th century, adoration is due to God alone.[37] According to Abu al Barakat (d. 1324), we can represent Christ, because, through His Incarnation "He put us in the obligation to represent Him according to the aspects in which He appeared"; and "the picture of Christ is made after the model of His Humanity, not of His Divinity". Bishop Yousab (18th c.) summarizes everything by writing that "the representation of Christ on an icon and its use in the rite of the veneration are the normal result of the divine Incarnation".[38] In the Coptic tradition, in the 20th century, Father Tadros Malaty in his book *The Church House of God* wrote two chapters about the

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by Malaty, *The Church House of God*, 298-304. The Ethiopian prayer according to a Geez text was translated into English for me by the late Father Seife Selassie in Addis Ababa.

[34] See his bachelor of divinity presented in the St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, New York, in 1973, *Religious Art in Armenian Theology*.

[35] S. Der Nersessian, "Image Worship in Armenia and its opponents," 413.

[36] Quoted by Christoph Schönborn, *L'icône du Christ*, *Fondements théologiques* 2nd ed. (Fribourg, 1976), 98: "L'icône laisse transparaître l'hypostase du Christ".

[37] See his chapter "Icônes et raisons qui les rendent nécessaires dans l'Eglise".

[38] Quoted by Malaty, *The Church House of God*, 272.

iconostasis and the icons. He is not afraid to quote Saint John Damascene and his famous formula: "One must not adore the creature more than the Creator." He also writes that Christianity is founded on the revelation of God through His Incarnate Son (John 1:18): thus, through this Incarnation, the icon of God has been revealed to us (John 14: 8, 9). The physical appearance of God on earth makes possible the fact of representing His Image and in order to expose the events of His life in the form of icons. In regards to this topic, as Father Malaty remarks, Saint John Damascene says that when the Invisible has become Visible in His Flesh, we can represent his Baptism, his Transfiguration, etc... and also His miracles which prove His divinity. Father Malaty also writes that the iconoclasts not only were opposed to the ritual veneration of pictures, but that certain Church Fathers considered that they despised the Divine Incarnation as well, because anyone who despises the icon of the Lord also despises His Incarnation. He also insists on the fact that icons represent a vital part of the Tradition of the Coptic Orthodox Church which was developed throughout the centuries: the Coptic icons reveal the dogmas and the spirituality of the Coptic Church.[39] Finally, according to Pope Shenuda (d. 2012), all pictures are not icons, as only icons give at the same time a dogmatic teaching. In front of each icon of Christ, we must remember his divinity and his humanity, as in fact the two are never separated.[40]

*Conclusion*

It is enough to see the faithful of the Oriental Orthodox Churches praying in front of icons to understand that they venerate them greatly. By studying texts of the prayers of consecration of icons, we can also find arguments concerning the theological and Christological significance of pictures in the traditions of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Too often we still hear that the Oriental Orthodox Churches are "monophysites", which they refute categorically. For the Oriental Orthodox the icon of Christ is a Christological argument, and not a theological obstacle, because it is the proof of the visibility and the real humanity of God the Saviour, as expressed for example by the Doctrine of Addai (Syriac, 5th century): "The body is then the pure dignity of his illustrous divinity; thanks to it we can see his hidden divinity".[41] According to Leonid Ouspensky, iconology is like a summit of Christological reflexion, because the two are intrinsically linked in function of the theology of Christ's Incarnation.[42] In fact, if the non Chalcedonian Churches had really been monophysites, if they believed like the heretic Eutyches that the Humanity of Christ had been absorbed by His Divinity, would they have bothered to represent His Humanity on icons and other pictures/paintings? It is this Christological demonstration which pushed me in

[39] Malaty, *The Church House of God*, 225-420.

[40] Interview with Pope Shenuda in the WCC in Geneva in August 1992.

[41] Quoted by A. Desreumaux, "La doctrine d'Addaï, l'image du Christ et les monophysites," in *Nicée II, 787-1987. Douze siècles d'images religieuses. Actes du Colloque International Nicee II, College de France 2-4 octobre 1986*, ed. F. Boespflug and N. Lossky (Paris 1987), 79.

[42] *Théologie de l'icône dans l'Eglise orthodoxe* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1982), 12.

1993 to write on the topic of iconography in the Oriental Orthodox Churches and of their veneration of icons.

Icons have clearly developed a spirituality and also Orthodox faith in the Oriental Orthodox Churches. I hope that those who are closed and negative towards this dialogue between these two families of Churches can read the type of quotations I have given in this article, in order to be convinced of the Orthodoxy of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, at least at the iconographical level. Here I have been able to give only very few examples in order to raise interest in this topic. More examples are to be found in my book *Rôle des images et vénération des icons*. Some people should continue to study and write articles and books on the topic of the veneration of icons in the Oriental Orthodox Churches, including from texts in original languages which are not yet translated. Some should also study in depth the texts of the prayers of consecration of the icons.

# Anathema: An Obstacle to Reunion?*

*Fr. John H. Erickson*

Few Christian divisions have been more long-lasting or painful than that between the Eastern, or Chalcedonian, Orthodox Churches and the Oriental, or non-Chalcedonian, Orthodox Churches. The separation of these church families began during the Christological controversies of antiquity, in the wake of the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This separation has now lasted over 1500 years. Yet developments over recent decades, beginning with informal dialogue in the 1960s and continuing with formal dialogue in the 1980s and 1990s, have brought these two families of Churches close to reunion. In 1990 the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Churches could go so far as to declare: "In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology (...), we have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways" (1990 Chambésy Agreed Statement, par. 9). Indeed, as the documents of the dialogue point out, "Our mutual agreement is not limited to Christology, but encompasses the whole faith of the one undivided church of the early centuries" (1989 Anba Bishoy Agreed Statement, par. 11), including, for example, the veneration of icons.

But if there is full unity of faith, what more is needed? We face a moment of truth. In their official statements on ecumenism, both Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches have insisted vigorously on the necessity of unity of faith, and that unity of faith is *the* essential precondition for communion. In so doing our Churches have at least implied that, when unity of faith is present, full communion is not only the logical but even the necessary consequence. But at this point the dialogue of our Churches has hit an unexpected snag. What is to be done about the anathemas which each side hurled against its opponents during our many centuries of estrangement? The 1990 Agreed Statement of the Joint Commission went on to say: "Both families agree that all the anathemas and condemnations of the past which now divide us should be lifted by the Churches in order that the last obstacle to the full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God. Both families agree that the lifting of anathemas and condemnations will be consummated on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical". (par. 10) But so far this has not been done. In fact, from both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian quarters, criticism—sometimes quite strident—has come to focus precisely on this issue. How can we lift these anathemas without betraying our holy Fathers who imposed them in the first place? How can we enter into communion with those

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who honour as saints precisely those whom our holy Fathers in the past anathematized as heretics?

One can read statements from both Oriental and Eastern Orthodox arguing precisely this. For example, according to a popular presentation of the position of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church:

> (...) to lift the anathemas imposed in the past upon those Chalcedonian Fathers and to accept them as saints would dishonour those Oriental Orthodox Church Fathers who condemned the Chalcedonians (...) Since these anathemas have been observed for about 1500 years by our Holy Fathers as inscribed in our liturgical texts and hymnody, they shall not be lifted.[1]

Much the same attitude can be seen in a memorandum from the monks of Mount Athos, which vigorously objects to "purging the liturgical books of texts which refer to the anti-Chalcedonians as heretical". As the memorandum continues:

> The sacred services of many confessors of the Faith, of many righteous Fathers, and especially the Holy Fathers of the Fourth Council in Chalcedon will be mutilated (...) We ask: Are all the texts referred to above simply ornamental elements in Orthodox hymnology so that they can be painlessly and harmlessly removed, or are they basic elements of Orthodoxy, whose removal will cause the eradication of what we understand as Orthodoxy.[2]

The memorandum from Mount Athos also rejects that line of thinking which "considers that the anathemas were laid upon the heretics by the Ecumenical Councils in a spirit lacking love, while today, since love now exists, union can be accomplished". "Such a way of thinking", the memorandum states, "directs a profound blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, through Whose inspiration these decisions were made, and against the sacred memory of the Holy Fathers, whom the Church calls God-bearers, Mouths of the Word, and Harps of the Spirit (...)"

Practically inseparable is the question of the meaning and authority of Ecumenical Councils. The Oriental Orthodox regard three Councils as Ecumenical, while the Eastern Orthodox, seven. It was in Councils four through seven that Oriental Fathers like Dioscorus of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch were condemned; and it was in these Councils that Leo of Rome, condemned as crypto-Nestorian by the Orientals, was hailed as a pillar of right belief. According to the Joint Commission for dialogue, a sufficient basis for reconciliation is the fact that both families of Churches confess the *faith* of all seven of the Councils recognized as ecumenical by the Chalcedonians, even though they do not accord the same ecumenical authority to all these Councils. But is this sufficient? According to some Eastern Orthodox, the Orientals must indicate their full and unqualified acceptance of seven Ecumenical Councils; they must accept not only the substance of the faith of these Councils but also their disciplinary norms and terminology—and presumably also their anathemas. For example, Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem in 1997 wrote a letter to Patriarch Ignatius of Antioch protesting, among other things, the latter's eagerness to move forward to reunion

[1] *The Ethiopian Tewahedo Church* (New York, n.d.), 108.

[2] Memorandum of the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain Concerning the Dialogue Between the Orthodox and the anti-Chalcedonian Churches, ser. no. ph 2/l 16/455, May 14/27, 1995.

on the basis of the work of the Joint Commission for dialogue. "According to Holy Tradition", Patriarch Diodorus says, "the non-Chalcedonians ought to accept absolutely and completely all the terms and canons of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon, in its entirety, as well as the following Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, also in their entirety".[3]

For the Chalcedonian Orthodox, can the anathemas pronounced at Councils four through seven be lifted and, if so, how? This question sometimes has been approached from a juridical perspective: Who has the authority to lift an anathema? In this perspective, the answer would appear to be clear: An anathema can be lifted, but only by a body of the same or greater authority as the one which imposed it. According to this line of thinking, it was possible for Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI in 1965 to lift the anathemas of 1054, since these had involved only the local churches in question—indeed only the heads of these churches, the distant predecessors of the current Patriarch and Pope. So also, according to this line of thinking, it was possible for a plenary synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1971 to lift the anathemas which had been levelled against the Old Believers by the Moscow Council of 1666-67. But what about an anathema pronounced by an Ecumenical Council? The Joint Commission in 1993 urged that "the lifting of anathemas should be made unanimously and simultaneously by the heads of all churches of both sides". But are "the heads of all the churches" the juridically competent body? Not according to the memorandum from Mount Athos, which denounces this "decision of the Joint Commission concerning the possibility of lifting an anathema placed by an Ecumenical Council". According to the memorandum, this is "alien to the sound mind of the Church" and "offends the fundamental consciousness of the Church concerning the authority of the Ecumenical Councils". From this juridical perspective, only another Ecumenical Council would have the authority to lift the anathemas imposed by Councils four through seven, though in a pinch presumably a Great and Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church would do—when and if such a Synod meets.

But the issue of the anathemas is not simply a juridical question. It is a question of the historical consistency of Orthodoxy itself, a question of the unity of the Church not only in space, with other professing Christians here and now, but in time, with the holy Fathers and Mothers of all ages. In this perspective, it becomes a matter of considerable significance whether one labels a given individual a saint or a heretic. As Metropolitan John Zizioulas has pointed out, membership in the Church does not mean simply the enjoyment of an a-temporal communion with Christ. It implies entering into communion with the saints of all the ages, as expressed among other places in the diptychs, the calendar, and liturgical observances. And here by "saints" we should not think simply of those conspicuous for their personal sanctity. As Zizioulas points out, "saints are signs of the glory of God in this world not so much as individuals as *in* the context of the communion of saints, the advance guard of the One Body. 'Saint' therefore is a relational term; if relationship is broken—if unity is

[3] Letter no. 361, May 17, 1997.

broken—the meaning of sanctity itself dramatically shifts".[4] Can any body, even an Ecumenical Council, attempt to overturn the decision of a previous Ecumenical Council concerning who is a holy Father and who is a heretic without calling into question the unity and continuity of the Church through time? This is the question which the memorandum from Mount Athos raises when it denounces "the attack upon the validity and authority of the Holy Ecumenical Councils by the decision of the Joint Commission that the Anti-Chalcedonian heresiarchs Dioscorus, Jacob, Severus, etc. be considered not heretical but Orthodox in their thinking". As the memorandum continues,

> The consciousness of the Orthodox Church recognizes that infallibility and authority in the Holy Spirit is in the ecumenical councils and refuses to accept the possibility of revising the decisions of an ecumenical council by another ecumenical council without the latter council being considered as a heretical conventicle (...)

How can one respond to such denunciations? Here it is important to consider what kind of authority we ascribe to ecumenical councils.

The memorandum from Mount Athos uses the word "infallibility". This may be an unfortunate choice of words, the result of an understandable but regrettable reaction to Roman claims of *papal* infallibility. It would be more accurate simply to say that the Ecumenical Councils have inerrantly defined the faith and delineated the boundaries of true piety. But even if we speak of the "infallibility" of Ecumenical Councils, certainly this infallibility does not imply full and direct divine inspiration for each and every statement made in the course of these Councils. It does not, for example, mean that Councils and council Fathers cannot be mistaken concerning matters of fact or inconsistent in their terminology. Councils bear witness to the faith of the Church, and the adequacy of their words for this faith—and the appropriateness of their terminology and of their anathemas—must always be evaluated in the light of this faith.

Let us turn specifically to anathemas as these have been pronounced by successive Ecumenical Councils. These show an interesting progression as we move from earlier Councils to subsequent Councils. At the time when a given error or heresy is most pressing, an anathema, if pronounced, is usually quite specific about the position that is being condemned. The First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea, for example, reacting against the heresy which subsequent generations have called Arianism, concluded its creed with the following words: "And whosoever shall say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, or that before he was begotten he was not, or that he was made of things that were not, or that he is of a difference substance (*hypostasis*) or essence (*ousia*) [from the Father] or that he is a creature, or subject to change or conversion—all that so say, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them".[5] As we come to later councils, the formulation becomes much less specific about the errors in question. Instead, it tends to be attached specifically to the person of

[4] "Ecclesiological Issues Inherent in the Relations Between Eastern Chalcedonian and Oriental Non-Chalcedonian Churches," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 16 (1971): 144-162, here at 149.

[5] *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ser. 2, vol. 14, 3.

Arius rather than to the position which he espoused: Anathema to Arius! We see a similar progression when it comes to other heresies. In the early stages of the Christological controversies, St. Cyril's Twelve Anathematisms directed against the theology of Nestorius are quite specific. For example, the fourth anathematism reads: "If anyone shall divide between two persons or subsistences those expressions which are contained in the Evangelical and Apostolical writings, or which have been said concerning Christ by the Saints, or by himself, and shall apply some to him as to a man separate from the Word of God, and shall apply others to only the Word of God the Father, on the ground that they are fit to be applied to God: let him be anathema".[6] These anathematisms were included verbatim in the acts of the Third Ecumenical Council, Ephesus (431), but thereafter, formulations generally are content simply to *anathematize* Nestorius. In other words, a kind of theological "short-hand" develops. Instead of anathematizing a heretical position, which may be rather cumbersome to summarize and explain, we give this position a name and anathematize it as a heresy—Arianism or Nestorianism—or, more often, we associate it with a specific person and anathematize him—Arius or Nestorius.

In the case of Arius or Nestorius, the meaning of this "short-hand" is reasonably clear to the point of being self-evident. By saying "anathema to Nestorius" we are saying "anathema" to the positions enumerated by St. Cyril and repeated at the Council of Ephesus. But in some cases this "short-hand" can deceive. If we are very clear about what is being condemned, well and good. But if we rely simply on the "shorthand" of later councils, we may be misled. This point may be illustrated by reference to what Chalcedonian Orthodox regard as the Sixth Ecumenical Council, III Constantinople (681), which proclaimed anathema to Dioscorus "hated of God" and to the "impious" Severus of Antioch. This Council was faced by the heresies of monotheletism and monenergism, which held that there was but one will and one natural energy in Christ. As was frequently the case when faced with a new challenge, Orthodox churchmen on the one hand denounced these heresies as dangerous innovations, but on the other they tried to demonstrate that the new heresies were simply old, long-condemned heresies in disguise. Like the monks of Mount Athos, like the Fathers of the ancient Councils generally, and for that matter like the heretics who assembled in the various ancient pseudo-councils, the Fathers of the Third Council of Constantinople wished to demonstrate the historical consistency of their position and at the same time, the coherence of their opponents' position with that of earlier heretics. Thus at the Third Council of Constantinople the contemporary monothelites were seen as holding, among other things, the heresy of Apollinarius, who had held that Jesus Christ did not possess a human rational soul (*nous*)—a heresy which, according to the Third Council Constantinople, was condemned at the First Council of Constantinople (381). In fact the story of the First Council of Constantinople is much more complex than a reading simply of the acts of the Third C Constantinople would suggest; at First Council of Constantinople itself, the question of Apollinarius' teaching seems to have been

[6] Ibid. 211.

tangential at most.[7] So also, at Third Council of Constantinople the monothelites were seen as holding the heretical positions condemned at Chalcedon and Second Council of Constantinople (553), which the council associated respectively with Dioscorus and Severus, among others.

Hence, in the course of a long series of anathemas pronounced at the final session of the council, we find the names of Dioscorus (elsewhere described by the council as "hated by God") and Severus (elsewhere characterized as "impious"). Clearly, by the time of the Third Council of Constantinople popular opinion did associate these names with heretical positions condemned at earlier councils. And this tendency continues in later centuries. For example, hymnography for the Feast of the Seven Ecumenical Councils (July 16) can exhort the orthodox to "abhor" Dioscorus and Severus along with a multitude of other heretics.[8] But these formulations—these "short-hand" notes from later times—in fact are very misleading.

Let us first consider the case of Dioscorus. While the Third Council of Constantinople can say anathema to Dioscorus and regard him as a progenitor of the monothelite heresy, this does not accurately reflect the views and activities of Dioscorus or how the Council of Chalcedon actually dealt with him. At the Council Dioscorus was indeed deposed, but as the acts of the Council indicate, "it was not for the faith that Dioscorus was deposed but because he had excommunicated the lord Leo, archbishop [of Rome], and that summoned three times, he did not come. This is why he was deposed".[9] He did not in fact espouse the teaching of Eutyches, whose teaching concerning Christ and whose person was condemned at Chalcedon. To use the words of John Romanides, an Eastern Orthodox theologian deeply engaged in the theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox: "The backbone of the Orthodox tradition is the fact that the Logos became consubstantial with us. There can be no doubt that Dioscorus agrees with this fact and so could never be accused of being a monophysite along with Eutyches".[10]

Let us also consider the case of Severus. He clearly affirms the basic Christological truth that Jesus Christ is consubstantial with His Father in his divinity and consubstantial with us in His humanity. In other words, he does not fall into the heresy of Eutyches condemned at Chalcedon, which denied Christ's consubstantiality with us and thus His full humanity. But Severus uses technical terms like *hypostasis* and *physis* in ways very different from the later formulations of Chalcedonian Orthodoxy. If read on his own terms, he is not guilty of either

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[7] For a convenient presentation of the First Council of Constantinople, see Archbishop Peter L'Huillier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils: The Disciplinary Work of the First Four Ecumenical Councils* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996), 101-142.

[8] On this and other issues related to our subject, see now Dorothea Wendebourg, "Chalcedon in Ecumenical Discourse," *Pro Ecclesia* 7 (1998): 307-332.

[9] Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople, in Session 5, quoted by L'Huilllier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils* 189, with further discussion of the case of Dioscorus.

[10] Leo of Rome's Support of Theodoret, Dioscorus of Alexandria's Support of Eutyches, and the Lifting of the Anathemas," paper presented at the November 1993 meeting of the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Geneva), 6.

the heresy of monophysitism or the heresy of monotheletism as these have been condemned by the Ecumenical Councils. [11] His terminology may seem idiosyncratic, but it is hardly less so than that of most of his contemporaries, whether Chalcedonian (like Leontius of Byzantium) or non-Chalcedonian. In other words, he was misunderstood, perhaps deliberately, perhaps inadvertently, by the time that the Third Council of Constantinople labelled him "infamous" and anathematized him as one of the progenitors of monotheletism.

Here a further question may be posed. What weight should be given to an objection raised by Patriarch Diodorus in his letter to Patriarch Ignatius: "Are we to believe that they [viz., the theologians of the period in question] did not correctly understand those present in the Synods with whom they communicated in a common language and education"? But while it certainly is true that these theologians were working in the same language, Greek, it does not follow that they used technical terms—especially those with a philosophical colouring—in the same way. We sometimes face the same problem today. English now serves as an international language in much the way that Greek did in antiquity, but as a frequent participant in international meetings once remarked, "We live in a world in which everyone knows English—bad English!" A concrete word like "shoe" will be understood in the same way by virtually every speaker of the English language, even by those for whom English is a second language, but a word like "existential" or "natural" will mean different things to different people, even to those whose *only* language is English. And of course the problem becomes even more complicated in the case of theologians who worked in different languages.

The faith of the ancient councils—the First Council of Nicaea, the First Council of Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, the Second Council of Constantinople, the Third Council of Constantinople, the Second Council of Nicaea—is consistent, whether one labels all seven or only the first three as ecumenical. But their terminology is not always consistent. The First Council of Nicaea, for example, used the words *hypostasis* and *ousia* as synonyms, while the later councils took great pains to distinguish them. So too, the anathemas of the ancient councils are not always consistent. Too often we have mistaken the "short-hand" of later periods for historical fact. The conclusion of the Joint Commission therefore is quite appropriate: "Both families agree that the lifting of anathemas and condemnations will be consummated on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical" (1990 Chambésy Agreed Statement, par. 10). Let us hope that this mutual lifting of anathemas occurs soon!

[11] On this subject see most conveniently the article by John Behr, "Severus of Antioch: Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Perspectives," in this volume.

# The Presuppositions for Restoring Ecclesiastical Communion between the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches: Lifting of Anathemas and Competent Ecclesiastical Authority*

*Vlassios I. Phidas*

*1. The Dogmatic Definitions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Full Agreement on the Orthodox faith*

The issues of lifting mutually pronounced anathemas and restoring *ecclesiastical communion* between the Orthodox Church and the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches (or Oriental Orthodox Churches) "share a fundamental and unalterable presupposition: full agreement on the Orthodox faith", as it was formulated in the decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils and the related patristic tradition of the Church. This has always been the long-established canonical conscience and practice of the Orthodox Church.

Agreement of faith was always sought mainly through official theological dialogue on the disputed points of the traditional faith. The realization of this agreement, however, was always confirmed by the co-signing of *common theological statements* by *the highest ecclesiastical authorities* of the two sides, usually in a synodal context. Such an action opened the way for immediate restoration of ecclesiastical communion, which was always concluded with a common celebration of the divine liturgy and participation of clergy and laity from both sides.

This procedure was sanctioned by the common canonical tradition and was employed with striking consistency in the Orthodox Church during the 2000 years of its historic life. The display of historical examples would strengthen the already known strict attachment of the Church to the above mentioned self-evident principles of the ecclesiastical conscience, but this is not deemed to be necessary for the present communication. Nevertheless, what is necessary here is to relate certain basic criteria of the operation of the ecclesiastical conscience:

*First*, that the unity of the Church is not only a command of its founder,[1] but also a dogma of faith, which is confessed by the entire body of the Church in every Eucharistic Synaxis. This command of the founder of the Church is experienced by the ecclesiastical body as a fundamental activity and as a constant prayer, since any kind of split traumatizes the body of the Church and creates a

* Originally appeared in Greek in *Ἐκκλησία* 71 (1994): 26-30, 70-73, 106-108. It has been translated for the purpose of this publication into English by Fr. George Dion. Dragas.

[1] *John* 17:9-26.

problem in its operation. Consequently, the search for the restoration of the unity of the Church is the highest debt of every theological dialogue.

*Second*, that the decisive importance of the unity of the Church is understood only as a manifestation of the Orthodox faith, although Orthodoxy of faith is not always exhausted in the historic choices of formulation of the content of a disputed truth of the faith. Certainly, the terminology of the *Horoi* of the Ecumenical Councils is experienced by the ecclesiastical conscience as the authentic formulation of the truth of the faith on a particular theological issue. Nevertheless, it is not the only linguistic investment of the related content of the faith. The authentic expression of the faith, through the terminology of the dogmatic decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, *does not ascribe priority to the letter over the content of the faith*. On the other hand, unity of faith is not possible without agreement on the terminology of the dogmatic decisions of the Ecumenical Councils. Consequently, the full agreement on the Christological dogma, which has been proclaimed through Common Theological Statements of the Joint-Commission of the Dialogue, and has already been praised by the Leaders of the local Orthodox Churches, covers a basic presupposition of agreement on the faith for the restoration of ecclesiastical communion.

*Third*, that the unity of faith renders even more imperative the need for restoring ecclesiastical unity, even if there are still differences in partial or secondary matters, because the movement towards the unity of the Church travels through "*economy*" (οἰκονομία) in order to arrive at "*exactitude*" (ἀκρίβεια) in the spiritual life of the Church. It was in this spirit that Basil the Great proposed the restoration of ecclesiastical communion with the Homoiousians, in spite of their general and explicit reservations in their Pneumatology: "We propose to all the brethren who are willing to join us in the faith of Nicaea (the Nicene Creed). If they assent to that, let us further require that the Holy Spirit ought not to be called a creature, nor any of those who say so be received into communion. I do not think that we ought to insist upon anything beyond this. For I am convinced that by longer communication and mutual experience without strife, if anything more requires to be added by way of explanation, the Lord Who works all things together for good for them that love Him, will grant it".[2] It was in the same spirit that Athanasius the Great characterized the leader of the *Homoiousians*, Basil of Ancyra, and his followers, in spite of their rejection of the term "*homoousios*" and the First Ecumenical Council, as "having the same mind with us", i.e. as being already Orthodox in faith. Consequently, the unity of the Church as a fundamental dogma of faith, can also be ascertained through employing ecclesiastical economy, when fundamental truths of the faith are not thereby ill-affected, or when differences are curable through "un-quarrelsome contestation" (ἀφιλόνεικος συγγυμνασία) in the common spiritual arena of the Church.

The above criteria of the long-lasting ecclesiastical tradition are more easily applicable to the case of the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches,

[2] *Epistle* 113.

not only because through the Dialogue agreement on the Christological dogma has been achieved, but also because the faith of these Churches is constantly nourished by the *common patristic tradition* of the first Christian centuries. It is self-evident, therefore, that the lifting of anathemas mutually imposed from both sides, as well as the restoration of ecclesiastical communion between the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches are approached in this study with the positive spirit of the above criteria of the ecclesiastical tradition and always under the light of the already realized agreement on the indisputable aspects of the Christological dogma, even if the ratification of this agreement by the competent ecclesiastical authorities of the two sides is pending.

It is certain that the unanimous acceptance of the two *Common Theological Statements* (1989, 1990) by all the members of the Joint Theological Commission also expresses the Pan-Orthodox ecclesiastical conscience, as the latter was clearly articulated at the Third Pro-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Consultation (1986), which recorded as the main obstacles for the restoration of ecclesiastical communion with the Ancient Oriental Churches the following: a) *the mutual lifting of the anathemas that were pronounced from both sides*, b) *the acceptance of the dogmatic decisions and co-numeration of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Ecumenical Councils*. This means that the Orthodox ecclesiastical conscience had been already persuaded by the unofficial theological discussions, that the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches on the one hand have always rejected the Monophysitism that was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council, and on the other hand have utilized in their theology the Christology of St. Cyril of Alexandria, which has remained the unshakeable basis for the articulation of the dogmatic decisions of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils.

The unanimous acceptance of the doctrine of St. Cyril as the common basis both of the decisions of the above-mentioned Ecumenical Councils, and of the related doctrine of the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches, makes it obvious, that no serious theological difficulties could possibly arise in their common declaration of a mutual agreement regarding the content of the dogmatic decisions of the above-mentioned Ecumenical Councils. This was demonstrated during the composition of the common *Theological Statements* — and more particularly in the second *Statement*—in which the description of the theological agreement on the Christological dogma made clear reference to the terms of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Ecumenical Councils (paragraphs 1-7). Even the unclear articulation of the 8$^{th}$ paragraph, which caused certain reactions in a limited number of theological circles, resulted from inter-Orthodox theological antitheses, since the representatives of the Ancient Oriental Churches left it to the representatives of the Orthodox Church to propose any articulation they desired.

Nevertheless, in the second *Joint Theological Statement*, although full agreement on the theological content of the dogmatic decisions of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Ecumenical Councils was affirmed, the discussion regarding the acceptance of the *ecumenicity* of these Councils by the representatives of the Ancient Oriental Churches was deemed unseasonable, since these Councils pronounced anathemas against leading persons of their Churches.

Consequently, the matter of *co-numeration* of the Seven Ecumenical Councils is indissolubly connected with the quest of *mutual lifting* of anathemas pronounced from both sides. However, the second *Theological Statement* declared the common theological conviction, that *the lifting of these anathemas is possible*, inasmuch as they were not pronounced against conscientious upholders of identified heretical doctrine. This means that the co-numeration of the seven Ecumenical Councils presupposes an official ecclesiastical action, previously taken from both sides, which would remove from the memory of the Church the anathemas that had been previously and mutually pronounced.

*2. Presuppositions for the Lifting of Anathemas of Ecumenical Councils*

What are the presuppositions for the lifting of the anathemas of Ecumenical Councils, which were pronounced on leading personalities (Dioscorus, Severus, et al.) of the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches from the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils? The second Theological Statement (1990) specified as an absolute presupposition the absence of conscientious deviation of specific persons towards a heretical doctrine that had been already condemned by the Church. This presupposition was considered necessary for the initiation of an ecclesiastical procedure towards lifting specific anathemas, and this is why the relation of these persons to the heresy of Eutychian Monophysitism acquires a decisive significance. More specifically, however, with regard to the lifting of the anathemas that were pronounced against them, it is their activity during the critical period of the evaluation of the work of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the ecclesiastical conscience (451-553) that carries weight.

Contemporary historical, patrological and theological research has already proven, that Dioscorus of Alexandria was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council mainly *for canonical reasons and not as a defender of the heretical views* of the Archimandrite Eutyches. This applies more so in the case of Severus of Antioch, who was the main representative of the theology of anti-Chalcedonianism. Severus, not only condemned the Eutychian Monophysitism, but also engaged in long-lasting struggles against the supporters of the Monophysite heresy in the extremist circles of anti-Chalcedonians, as it appears in his acrimonious theological dispute with the Monophysite Sergius the Grammarian. This was widely known at the Standing Synod of Constantinople (536), which, as we shall see, renewed the anathema of Severus. It is very typical that in this struggle Severus defended even the Chalcedonian formula *two natures after the union* ("δύο φύσεις μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν") making the qualification, however, that the distinction of the two natures of Christ was possible only *in theory* ("ἐν θεωρίᾳ"), i.e. as the Fifth Ecumenical Council affirmed.[3]

Nonetheless, the rejection of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and its decisions by Severus and other moderate anti-Chalcedonians was deemed sufficient reason for their anathematization by the subsequent Ecumenical Councils, although *the dogmatic Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council was authentically interpreted by the Church in the light of the Christological doctrine

[3] See Vlassios I. Phidas, *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. I (Athens, [3]2002), 679ff. (in Greek).

of St. Cyril already by the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Indeed, the long-lasting theological fermentations between the Fourth and the Fifth Ecumenical Councils (451-553) could be regarded as a prolonged *process of reception* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the ecclesiastical conscience, and that this process was completed with the dogmatic *Horos* of the Fifth Ecumenical Council.

Furthermore, the necessity of the synodal formula *in two natures* ("ἐν δύο φύσεσιν") for combatting the heresy of Monophysitism, or the suspicion of the condemnation of the Cyrillian *miaphysite formula* ("μία φύσις") by the Fourth Ecumenical Council, necessitated the authentic interpretation of both formulae by the Fifth Ecumenical Council. Consequently, the champions of the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril had serious "reservations" mainly against the "exclusive" formulation of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and they were not ready to accept this new terminology, which seemed problematic even to the members of this Council—more particularly with regard to choosing between the phrases *from two natures* ("ἐκ δύο φύσεων") and *in two natures* ("ἐν δύο φύσεσιν").[4] In addition, the dogmatic *Horos* of the Council authentically described only *how* ("τὸ πῶς") the union of the two natures was done, i.e., *without confusion*, *without change*, *without separation and without division* ("ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀχωρίστως, ἀδιαιρέτως"), and not *what* ("τὸ τί") happened at this union, which is exactly why the theology of the *enhypostasia* ("τὸ ἐνυπόστατον") etc. was developed up until the Fifth Ecumenical Council.

The established procedure for the *reception* of an Ecumenical Council, however, did not exclude theological discussions regarding the terminology of its *Horos* and, in this particular case, it did not exclude the understandable problematic mainly amongst the Alexandrian theologians. Indeed, whilst St. Cyril had been elevated by the Council of Chalcedon to its highest theological authority, the above terminology of the Council was not fully regarded as compatible with the forms of his evolving Christological doctrine, since, as a matter of fact, the threat of the Monophysite heresy had not yet appeared. In this spirit, both Dioscorius and Severus were undoubtedly opponents not only of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, but also of the heresy of Monophysitism, which, anyway, was explicitly condemned in the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril, especially in defending against his opponents the formula that was closer to his heart: *One nature* (*or hypostasis*) *of God the Word incarnated* ("Μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη").

So, the anathemas that were pronounced against the leading personalities of the pre-Chalcedonian Ancient Oriental Churches obviously had to do with their contempt or rejection of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at a time of general *theological confusion* regarding the understanding or the interpretation of certain articulations of the *Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (*from two natures* or *in two natures*), which were considered problematic even to the majority of the members of this Council.[5] The extent of the *theological confusion* regarding the Christological terms could be more fully understood from either the unhampered

[4] Mansi VIII, 99ff.

[5] See, Phidas, *Ecclesiastical History*, 648ff.

use of the terminology of *Miaphysitism* ("μία φύσις (...)") before the Council of Chalcedon, or from the unclear anathematization of this terminology by the Fourth Ecumenical Council. The champion of the terminology *one nature of God the Word incarnate* ("μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη"), St. Cyril, conjoined this terminology with the authentic content of the faith, and this is why he did not exclude the right use of the *Dyophysite* terminology (δυοφυσιτικῶν ὅρων) *from two natures* ("ἐκ δύο φύσεων," PG 69, 297) or *from two perfect things* ("ἐκ δυοῖν τελείοιν"),[6] or even *in two natures* ("εἰς δύο φύσεις"),[7] etc. In this spirit, too, Flavian, the Archbishop of Constantinople, in his famous theological epistle (449) to Leo of Rome had declared the correctness of all the related formulations: *For, when we confess Christ in two natures after the incarnation and the inhomination, we confess one Christ in one hypostasis and in one person, and we do not reject speaking of one nature of God the Word incarnated and inhominated* ("Καὶ γὰρ ἐν δύο φύσεσιν ὁμολογοῦντες τὸν Χριστὸν, μετὰ τὴν σάρκωσιν καὶ τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει καὶ ἐν ἑνὶ προσώπῳ ἕνα Χριστὸν ὁμολογοῦμεν, καὶ μίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου φύσιν σεσαρκωμένην καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσασαν λέγειν οὐκ ἀρνούμεθα").[8]

Nevertheless, the Fourth Ecumenical Council explicitly anathematized those who mythologize about two natures of the Lord before the union, and remold one nature after the union (τοὺς δύο πρὸ τῆς ἑνώσεως φύσεις τοῦ Κυρίου μυθεύοντας, μίαν δὲ μετὰ τὴν ἕνωσιν ἀναπλάττοντας), in the sense, of course, that they introduced mixture and confusion (κρᾶσιν καὶ σύγχυσιν) of the two natures of Christ.[9] The inclusive formulation of the Council is correct, since St. Cyril condemned as heretical the terminology of one nature (μία φύσις) without the participle "incarnated" (σεσαρκωμένην): "For, if after speaking of one nature of the Word we kept silence, and did not bring in the phrase incarnated, but, as it were, left out the economy—a manner of speaking which for them might not be impossible (...) For he who throws out the economy and denies the enfleshment would be justly accused that he removed from the Son the perfect humanity (...) ("Εἰ μὲν γὰρ μίαν εἰπόντες τὴν φύσιν τοῦ Λόγου σεσιγήκαμεν, οὐκ ἐπενεγκόντες τὸ σεσαρκωμένην, ἀλλ᾽ οἷον ἔξωθεν θέντες τὴν οἰκονομίαν, ἦν αὐτῆς τάχα που καὶ οὐκ ἀπίθανος ὁ λόγος (...) Τοῦ γὰρ ἐκβάλλοντος τὴν οἰκονομίαν καὶ ἀρνουμένου τὴν σάρκωσιν ἦν τὸ ἐγκαλεῖσθαι δικαίως, ἀφαιρουμένου τὸν Υἱὸν τῆς τελείας ἀνθρωπότητος" (...)).[10] The anathematization of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, then, clearly referred to the erroneous use of the term "one nature" (μία φύσις) by the heretic Eutyches, but it could also be interpreted mainly by the Antiochian theologians as a general prohibition of the use of this term, especially in combination with the final selection in the Horos of the formula "in two natures" (ἐν δύο φύσεσιν).

[6] PG 77, 232.

[7] PG 69, 576.

[8] Mansi VI, 541.

[9] Mansi VII, 108ff.

[10] PG 77, 244.

It is evident that the well known clash of the two theological traditions would intensify during the period of reception of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the ecclesiastical conscience, since it was apparent that the Antiochian theologians disapproved as heretical even the correct terminology of Saint Cyril of Alexandria. The extremist Antiochian theologians used the Christological doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia not only in order to interpret the *Horos* of the Council, but also to condemn the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria, which, however, had been highly praised by this very Synod. The Alexandrian theologians had every reason to disapprove of the crypto-Nestorianism of the extremist Antiochian theologians and to project their theological reservations for the entire work of the Fourth Ecumenical Council. This theological confusion during the critical period of the *reception* (ἀποδοχή) of the Council leads to the conclusion, that it was not possible to characterize as heretical those who explicitly condemned the *Eutychian Monophysitism*, but remained firm regarding their reservations for the work of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

It is in this spirit that one should interpret the fact that the strong opponent of heretical Monophysitism, Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople, like the majority of the Patriarchs of the East, accepted the policy to support the *indirect sidestepping* of the Fifth Ecumenical Council by signing the *Henotikon* (Ἑνωτικόν) so that the unity of the Church might be guarded, without, however, condoning any deviation from the faith of Chalcedon. Indeed, during that transitional period those who had reservations about the Christological terminology or even the very Council of Chalcedon, but condemned Eutychian Monophysitism, were not classed as heretics, but were simply characterized as *Undecided* (Διακρινόμενοι), i.e. as Orthodox who had certain reservations about the work of the Council of Chalcedon. In other words, we have here the same phenomenon that occurred during the 4th century with the refusal of the Homoiousians (Ὁμοιουσιανοί) to accept the First Ecumenical Synod because of the rejection of the term *homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος). This theological struggle was carried out within the bosom of the Church, and their positions were regarded sometimes as acceptable and sometimes unacceptable by their local Church. In this sense their theological position during this period could be registered as belonging to the painful, but understandable consequences of the activation of the ecclesiastical conscience during the procedure of reception of the 4th Ecumenical Synod and its work by the full body of the Church.

The Church historian Evagrius describes with characteristic clarity the extremely unsettled ecclesiastical situation during this period: "Accordingly, during these times, the Council of Chalcedon was neither openly proclaimed in the most holy churches, nor yet was repudiated by all: but the presiding bishops acted each according to his individual opinion. So, some very resolutely maintained what had been put forth by that Council, and would not yield to the extent of one word of its determinations, nor admit even the change of a single letter (...) [i.e. the Chalcedonians]. Others, again, not only did not submit to the Council of Chalcedon and its determinations, but even anathematized both it and the *Tome* of Leo [i.e. the extreme anti-Chalcedonians]. Others, however, firmly adhered to the *Henotikon* of Zeno, and that too, although mutually at variance on

the point of the single and double nature; some being caught by the artful composition of that document; and others influenced by an inclination for peace [i.e. the moderate anti-Chalcedonians]. So the churches in general were divided into distinct factions, and their presiding bishops did not even admit each other to communion (...)".[11] In other words, the theological confusion concerning the *Horos* of Chalcedon was the main cause of the fracture of the unity of the Church not only between the Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians, but also between the upholders of each one of these two ecclesiastical trends.

So, the authentic interpretation of the *Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council became a more imperative need for the restoration of the unity of the Church, and was expressed by the activation of the theological operation of the Church. The survival of the Fourth Ecumenical Council in the ecclesiastical conscience was now possible only through the interpretation of its *Horos* in the light of the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril (*neo-Chalcedonianism*), which would also eliminate its arbitrary or incompatible interpretations. The theology of the *enhypostasia* (*τό ἐνυπόστατον*) was the mature product of these theological fermentations,[12] and the Cyrillian interpretation of the *Horos* of Chalcedon was officially sanctioned by the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553). In this spirit, the Fifth Ecumenical Council disentangled the Orthodoxy of the faith from the *variable* (πολύτροπον) understanding or interpretation of the union of the two natures of Christ, which could be also expressed with the "*monophysite*" terminology according to the 7th and 8th Anathemas of the Council: "If anyone using the expression, in two natures (...) or confessing the number of the natures, (...) does not take only in theory the difference of these natures which composed him, although this difference is not cancelled by their union, (...) but uses the number (two) in order to affirm that he has these natures separated and self-hypostatic, let him be anathema. If anyone from two natures (...) confesses the union that has been made, or speaks of one nature of God the Word that has been fleshed, and does not so understand these phrases as the holy Fathers taught, (...) but tries from such expressions to introduce one nature or substance of the Godhead and manhood of Christ, let him be anathema".

Consequently, the Christological terminology of the *Horos* of Chalcedon did not exclude any more the Cyrillian terminology of *miaphysitism* (μία φύσις), if this terminology did not conceal monophysite heretical perceptions. The Orthodoxy of the faith could now be expressed with the variety of expressions of the patristic tradition and especially of St. Cyril of Alexandria, namely, without affecting the fact "*that one Christ was constituted from the divine nature and the human being united according to hypostasis* (...)". With the completion of the theological fermentations from the Fourth to the Fifth Ecumenical Council (451-553) the procedure of the reception of the Fourht Ecumenical Council was closed, and was definitively handed over to the Church as the criterion of the Orthodox faith. The authentic interpretation of its *Horos* by the Fifth Ecumenical

[11] *Ecclesiastical History* III, 30.

[12] See Phidas, *Ecclesiastical History* I, 678ff.

Council excluded from then on any one-sided hermeneutical trends of the theological schools and attributed absolute value not to the contested terminology, but to the essential content of the faith regarding the mystery of the divine Inhomination.

It is apparent, then, that during this transitional period of the activation of the ecclesiastical conscience (451-553) the theological approaches that condemned Monophysitism using the criteria of the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria were placed within the limits of the faith, even if they turned against the one-sided interpretations of the *Horos* of Chalcedon mainly by Antiochian theologians. The anathemas imposed during this period between Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians are explained by the intensity of the ecclesiastical disputations *over the acceptance or rejection of the ecumenical authority of the Council of Chalcedon*, but they are certainly not established on a proven deviation of the moderate anti-Chalcedonians towards the heresy of Monophysitism. The anathemas mainly aimed at the *proleptic protection* of the unity of the Church from the violent clashes of the extremist representatives of the Alexandrian and the Antiochian theological traditions, since the Fourth Ecumenical Council was not only the *criterion*, but also the *problem* for the protection of this unity. The consecutive anathemas that were mutually imposed from each side constituted the main ecclesiastical means of each side for preventing secessions of the faithful from one side to the other either with the aid or without the aid of the political authority.

In this sense it was also confirmed by the Theological Dialogue that the *anti-Chalcedonianism* of the Ancient Oriental Churches was always contrary to the heresy of Monophysitism and originated from the zealous attachment to the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria, which rejected the usual extremist or crypto-Nestorian interpretations of the *Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the adherents of the Antiochian theological tradition. This realization establishes the readiness of the Church to move to the lifting of anathemas in order to provide solutions for both the restoration of the ecclesiastical communion with the Ancient Oriental Churches and the building up of the unity of the ecclesiastical body.

### *3. Competent Ecclesiastical Authority for the Lifting of Anathemas without Hurting the Ecumenical Status of the Councils*

Is it possible, however, to lift anathemas which were imposed by Ecumenical Councils, indeed without hurting their ecumenical status? And what is the competent ecclesiastical authority in the Orthodox Church which could proceed to lifting Anathemas? The answer to this double question is inferred from the reference to synodal conscience in Orthodox ecclesiology, which always specified not only the related canonical tradition or action, but also the entire operation of the ecclesiastical body in every place and in every epoch. Indeed, the lifting of anathemas of Ecumenical Councils is undoubtedly possible both ecclesiastically and canonically, if the above presuppositions with respect to the Orthodoxy of the faith are met, namely:

*First*, according to Orthodox ecclesiology and responsible ecclesiastical action, an Ecumenical Council is an authentic manifestation of the *ecclesial conscience*, under whose judgement the entire ecclesiastical procedure for the recognition of the ecumenicity of the status of every Council operated.

*Second*, the mutual interdependence of the *synodal authority* and the *ecclesial conscience* makes it obvious that, whatsoever is affirmed by the *Orthodox ecclesial* conscience cannot possibly stand in contrast to the spirit of the Ecumenical Councils which is expressed through this conscience.

*Third*, the *uncontested canonical readiness* of an Ecumenical Council to lift the Anathemas of a previous Ecumenical Council includes the *ecclesiological claim* of the ability accorded to the ecclesial conscience to lift from the memory of the Church these Anathemas by activating the synodal institution under the feasible, or acceptable in each epoch, canonical forms of its expression, since the ecclesiastical conscience, which is also expressed through these synodal forms, can operate again either for the acceptance or the rejection of synodal decisions, as happened in the cases of the Ecumenical Councils.

*Fourth*, the random dispute of the canonical ability of the Orthodox Church to deliberate on matters on which the authority of an Ecumenical Council becomes acceptable, would introduce a senseless ecclesiological problem concerning the *deficient authority* of the ecclesiastical conscience of the Orthodox Church *vis-à-vis* the authority of the Ecumenical Council and by extension the authentic continuity of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church in the Orthodox Church.

*Fifth*, the authentic continuity of the ecclesial conscience, which is realized especially through the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, excludes any contradiction of the newer synodal decisions towards the spirit of the recognized seven Ecumenical Councils, and this is why the text of the second *Theological Statement* of the dialogue was formulated in accordance with the corresponding dogmatic decisions of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, etc.

The above ecclesiological presuppositions indicate the contemporary *synodal authority* of the Orthodox Church for lifting specific historical Anathemas, which were renewed by Ecumenical Councils against persons or synods of the Ancient Oriental Churches, using as their main criterion the *non-acceptance* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and its decisions or the *secession* from the unity of the Church. Competent synodal authority according to Orthodox ecclesiology is the *Pan-Orthodox Synod*, which, in indissoluble unity with the conscience of the entire body of the Orthodox Church, extends the authority of the historic Ecumenical Council in the life of the Orthodox Church and is able to interpret authentically the spirit of the decisions of those Councils in the historic journey of the Church.

In this sense, the protection and the care for the restoration of the unity of the Church fall much more under the responsibility of the Pan-Orthodox Synod. This great responsibility grants to the *Pan-Orthodox Synod* the necessary ecclesiastical authority not only to interpret authentically the dogmatic decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, but also to determine the necessary canonical

solutions for the restoration of ecclesiastical unity. It was under this spirit that all the Great Synods of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Church of the East in general operated after the Great Schism (1054), as this is confirmed, for example, by the conscience of the Great Synods of the 14th century regarding the distinction between the uncreated divine essence and the uncreated divine energies.

The Orthodox ecclesial conscience, however, can also be expressed by the Synods of the Hierarchy of the local autocephalous and autonomous Churches, because both the ecumenical, as well as the local operation of the synodal institution constitute an authentic activation of this synodal conscience of the Church. *In addition, the unanimity of the Synods of all the local Orthodox Churches is canonically equivalent to the unanimous decision of a Pan-Orthodox Synod*, as long as the local Synods operate with reference to the Pan-Orthodox conscience, whilst the Pan-Orthodox Synod expresses the common mind (*phronema*) of the local Orthodox Churches. It was under this spirit, for example, that during the first three centuries the ecumenical conscience of the Church on serious matters was realized by activating the institution of the Local Synods, since the convocation of an Ecumenical Council was not possible.

Besides, the acceptance of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the ecclesiastical conscience was confirmed by activating the institution of the Eparchial Synods immediately after the enthronement of the Emperor Leo I (457-474). Consequently, the unanimous declaration of the Synods of the local Orthodox Churches, after the initiatory and justified proposal of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, covers the request for synodal expression of the mind of the Orthodox Church regarding the specific issue of lifting the Anathemas of Ecumenical Councils, inasmuch as the particular Anathemas of the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Synods were imposed on persons proven non-heretical.

It is characteristic that the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) conscientiously avoided imposing anathemas on Dioscorus and Severus, although it had the mission to restore the status of the Fourth Ecumenical Council which was questioned by both of them. The Anathema of the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople (536) against Severus of Antioch, Peter of Apameia and others who shared their opinions, was mainly based on the written accusations of the monks of the East concerning of violent actions against the Fourth Ecumenical Council both during the patriarchate of Severus in Antioch (512-518), and after his *condemnation* by the Synod of Constantinople (518). During this period Severus is characterized as *impious* (δυσσεβής) by the defenders of Chalcedon, not only because he rejected this Ecumenical Council, but also because he actively chased those who disagreed with him and proceeded to anti-canonical ordinations.

This is confirmed by the *Psephos* (Ψῆφος) of Patriarch Menas of Constantinople against Severus and those who shared his mind (536), who "did not cease to use written and unwritten doctrines, not only in the cities where they happened to lodge, but also in those that were far away, seducing the souls of the simple (believers) and making them communicants of their own perdition (...) In doing this, they flouted the benevolent canons, which clearly stipulate that one who has been condemned by a Synod, there is no way that he can

engage in any priestly service (...) Despising the apostolic succession of the most holy church of the Romans, which pronounced a sentence against them, and taking no notice of the Patriarchal Throne of this royal city and of the Holy Synod that gathers around it (...) they handled with unwashed hands, so to speak, the Holy Things (...) and did not cease to this day ravaging the order and peace of the Churches. They surreptitiously perpetrated what is forbidden in the canons, and training many others who trusted their lawless doctrine, practicing irregularly liturgical meetings and baptisms in houses and monasteries in order to transmit to many of those who had been deformed by them their hateful communion (...) And so on this account, the anathema took roots not only because it was initially imposed by our fathers, but was also because of our own decision, or rather, because through the authority of the canons the hope of their restoration might be revoked and so by learning those reared by the catholic and holy Church might avoid their deceit and false doctrine (...)".[13]

It is clear that the renewal of the previous condemnation (518) by the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople (536) was established mainly on the uncanonical actions of Severus and his followers, which hurt the unity and pastoral mission of the Church; and this is why this Synod explicitly used canon 4 of the Synod of Antioch (341), which applies to those who disregard the condemnatory decisions of Synods. The shuttering of the unity of the Church by the activities of Severus and his followers added weight primarily to the imposition of the Anathema by the *Endemousa Synod*, but it was always related to the *impious* rejection of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

Nonetheless, the *Endemousa Synod* avoided a direct connection of the doctrine of Severus with Eutychian Monophysitism and did not engage in a systematic explication of his heretical views, which would have been necessary for the imposition of an anathema for heretical error. Besides, it was already widely known, that Severus could not possibly be integrated into the condemned heresy of Eutychian Monophysitism. This is also confirmed by the *Edict* (Διάταγμα) of the Emperor Justinian (536) that was related to the decisions of the Endemousa Synod, which on the one hand censures the disruption of the unity of the Church by Severus, but on the other hand, indicates that his theology was not monophysite.

"And, of course, we do not leave out of royal ratification the vote that was justly promulgated against Severus (...) who, having previously taken the throne of the most holy Church of the Theoupolitans, shocked so much everybody, and created so much agitation afterwards, that he infused into the most-holy Churches a sort of common and undeclared war towards each other. Indeed, all this had been written to him by those who reigned before us, namely, that he used a variety of dogmas and conceptions alienated from uprightness and blasphemies which disturbed everyone, except only him who cleaves to the defiling and unholy error of both heresiarchs, Nestorius and Eutyches, and of the leaders of both of them who think that they are somehow opposite to each other, but who rushes to the same end of impiety and publishes the

[13] Mansi VIII, 1139-1142.

characteristic discourses of those two. For, although these are two doctrines that stand against each other, and each of them leads similarly to the soul's perdition, he suffers from something paradoxical, inasmuch as he has similarly fallen into both errors, now upholding this one, and then upholding the other, he regards himself as being a common vessel and that he could establish the discourses of such transgressions (...)".[14]

So, according to Justinian's Edict, Severus was both Nestorianizing and Monophysitizing in his theological terminology, but certainly he was also *impious* (δυσσεβής) for the Chalcedonians, because he rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council, rather than because he drifted into the heretical doctrine of Eutychian Monophysitism. Besides, the Fifth Ecumenical Council included in its *Horos* his Christological expressions which had been previously censured as suspected of crypto-Monophysitism.

*4. The Synodical Anathemas against Dioscorus and Severus*

And yet, how are the Anathemas of the Sixth and the Seventh Ecumenical Councils against Dioscorus and Severus justified? The anathema against Dioscorus constitutes a renewal of the anathema of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which, as it has been proven, was justified on canonical and not on dogmatic grounds. It is quite indicative, then, that the Fifth Ecumenical Council, although it renewed the anathema against Eutyches, and dealt entirely with the work of the Fourth Ecumenical Council consciously avoided the renewal of the anathema against Dioscorus. In this sense, it is particularly significant, with regard to the issue under examination, that, in spite of the recent renewal of the anathema of Severus by the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople (536), the Fifth Ecumenical Council *did not anathematize or ratify the anathematization of Severus*, although it was the only competent one to judge the opponents of the Fourth Ecumenical Council. Apparently, the evaluation of his theology in the Edict of Justinian, as standing between Nestorianism and Monophysitism did not provide the ease for a well-grounded condemnation of his suspected deviation into Eutychian Monophysitism. And yet the Sixth and the Seventh Ecumenical Councils renewed the anathemas against Dioscorus and Severus, without, of course, grounding theologically their decision, or explaining the silence of the Fifth Ecumenical Council regarding this issue.

The interpretation of this realization, however, is necessary for the evaluation of the character of these anathemas in the context of the proposal to have them lifted by a Pan-Orthodox Synod. *How, in other words, was it that the Fifth Ecumenical Council did not renew the Anathema against Severus*, although it could confront the already existing serious issue proportionately at least with the issue of Origen in the 11th anathema,[15] *whereas the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils deemed it necessary to renew the anathema against him*? The only possible explanation of this issue is historical. The Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council had been proven to have subsequently suffered many distortions and additions,

[14] Mansi VIII, 1151.

[15] Mansi IX, 384.

so that the Sixth Ecumenical Council had to deal with this serious matter in particular during an entire session.[16] A serious addition was the citing of the anathemas against *Origenist notions*, which had been condemned by the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople (534) with reference to the related Edict of Justinian (543), but did not occupy the Fifth Ecumenical Council.[17] So, then, just as the decisions against the *Origenist notions* of the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople, that had been sanctioned by the Edict of Justinian (543), were added to the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, likewise the decisions of the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople against Severus and his followers that had been similarly sanctioned by an Edict of Justinian (536) were also added to these Acts.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council apparently took as authentic decisions of the Fifth Ecumenical Council these decisions having been added to its Acts, and simply renewed them. Besides, they were useful for neutralizing the anti-Chalcedonian propaganda in the eparchies of the East, especially amongst the monks. The Seventh Ecumenical Council, then, did not have serious reservations about proceeding to a renewal of the anathemas against Dioscorus, Severus and their anti-Chalcedonian followers, who had disrupted the unity of the Church by their anti-Chalcedonian activities. It is certain, however, that without the posterior additions to the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, the ecclesiastical conscience usually attributed to the Fifth Ecumenical Council as well as the anathemas of the preceding Endemousas Synods were related to them.

It is in this spirit that St. Photios connects the *anathemas* against Severus and his followers with the work of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, although he had full knowledge of the fact that Severus and his followers had not been anathematized then, but had been anathematized by the Endemousa Synod of Constantinople (536): "Not only did this sacred chorus of the Fathers (i.e. the Fifth Ecumenical Council) denounce these slanders, but also before them, not much earlier in time (i.e. 536), deposed and anathematized Anthimus Trapezountios, who secretly fostered the mind-set of Eutyches, and Severus, and Peter of Apameia and Zooras and that entire, cunning and many-headed diaspora and gang (...) So, then, the divine gathering of the Hierarchs (i.e. the Fifth Ecumenical Council), having denounced and expelled all these, strengthened and ratified the unerring and divine [doctrines] of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church. And these are matters of the Fifth Ecumenical Council".[18] This text of St. Photius originates from the synoptic account of the work of the Ecumenical Councils and is identical with the *Confession* of faith used at the ordination of bishops, and this is why it formed in the ecclesiastical conscience the connection of the anathemas with the work of the Fifth Ecumenical Council. It is an uncontestable conviction, however, that the anathemas of an Endemousa Synod (536) were erroneously conjoined with the work or the Acts of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) and swayed their renewal by the Sixth and the Seventh Ecumenical Councils.

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[16] See Phidas, *Ecclesiastical History* I, 756ff.

[17] See Phidas, *Ecclesiastical History* I, 718-720.

[18] Mansi IX, 656-657.

This historical conviction makes it clear, that the *lifting of these anathemas does not affect the authority of the above Ecumenical Councils*, which did not include the examination of these specific matters in their theological work. In this light, the lifting of the anathemas of the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils against Dioscorus and Severus is possible, because, like their imposition, their lifting serves the unity of the Church. Besides, the unity of the Church on the Orthodox faith is a foundational dogma of faith, which not only is served by the operation of the institution of the Ecumenical Councils, but also activates the discerning facility of the Church for exercising economy, inasmuch as the Orthodox faith is not threatened. The normative authority of the Ecumenical Councils is not harmed, when the essential element of their specific dogmatic decisions is not contested.

In this same sense, St. Cyril did not insist on his *Twelve Anathemas* (*Δώδεκα Ἀναθεματισμοί*), which had been approved by the Third Ecumenical Council, by accepting as justification that they had been formulated against the heretical doctrine of Nestorius and, consequently, had been exhausted by the synodal anathematization of Nestorius and his doctrine. Indeed, he accepted as the *Horos* of this Synod instead of the *Twelve Anathemas*, the *Confession of Faith* (Ὁμολογία Πίστεως) of John of Antioch, which as the *Horos of Reconciliation* (Ὅρος Διαλλαγῶν) holds the place of *Horos* of the Third Ecumenical Council in order to serve the restoration of the disrrupted unity of the Church. It is self-evident that with the common confession of the *Horos of Reconciliation*[19] by Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch, the anathemas of the Third Ecumenical Council against those who rejected its decisions automatically subsided from the memory of the Church, without however hurting the ecumenical authority of this Synod.

Similar is the case of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was a known heretic and was not condemned by the Third Ecumenical Council, *by way of economy* (κατ᾽ οἰκονομίαν), so that the unity of the ecclesiastical body might not be disturbed. In this spirit, St. Cyril stresses, that this Councl, "censoring those who thought thusly, did not mention the man (i.e. Theodore of Mopsuestia) by way of economy, nor did it impose an anathema on his name, so that some who esteemed the man might not expel themselves from the Churches. As regards this economy, it is a sort of perfect and wise device (...)".[20] In other words, St. Cyril refrained from suggesting an Anathema of the known heretic, Theodore of Mopsuestia, so that his admirers might not be cut off from the body of the Church (*might not expel themselves from the Churches*), and he regarded the appropriateness of this refraining from pronouncing an anathema not only as causing no harm to the Third Ecumenical Council, but also as more preferable than a break in the unity of the ecclesiastical body.

In other words, St. Cyril generalizes the principle of economy in order to fortify the unity of the Church, even if by employing such means known heretics were not anathematized—hence his stress on the fact that "*in such cases economy*

[19] PG 77, 177-180.

[20] PG 77, 344ff.

*is a sort of perfect and wise device*".[21] Nevertheless, the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) anathematized the person and the work of Theodore of Mopsuestia, without believing anymore that with this anathematization the authority of the Third Ecumenical Council would be hurt. In any case, the Fifth Ecumenical Council also anathematized the heretical proposals of the works of Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa, without believing again that the authority of the Fourth Ecumenical Council would be hurt, since this Council had officially accepted them into communion as Orthodox. Consequently, *the deletion of these historic anathemas from the memory of the Church is not only ecclesiologically possible, but is also soteriologically necessary for many and obvious reasons.*

It is quite typical that canon 66 of the Synod of Carthage insists on the restoration of ecclesiastical communion with the Donatists, in spite of the confirmed differences on issues of sacramental experience, because, as it stresses, "*perhaps, as the apostle says, when we gather together in a taming manner those who have divergent convictions, might be led by God to a change of mind towards the full knowledge of the truth*". In this spirit, as we saw, Basil the Great, too, proposes restoration of communion with the Homoiousians, who rejected the First Ecumenical Council on account of the term *homoousios*, because he was convinced, "*that by longer communication and mutual experience without strife, if anything more requires to be added by way of explanation, the Lord Who works all things together for good for them that love Him*,[22] *will grant it*".[23] The criterion of ecclesiastical economy is much more potent in the restoration of communion with the Ancient Eastern Churches, which declare their complete agreement with the content of the Orthodox faith. "*Hope does not put us to shame*"![24]

*5. Conclusions*

From all the above, the following conclusions can be deduced regarding the questions that have raised for the exploitation of the agreement on the Christological dogma that was confirmed by the Joint Commission of the Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches.

*First*, the agreement on the faith, which was confirmed by unanimous acceptance of the two common *Theological Statements*, constitutes the fundamental presupposition for lifting the obstacles for the restoration of ecclesiastical communion, because the unity of faith is nourished by the patristic tradition and restores the unity of the Church in the Orthodox faith and in the canonical order.

*Second*, the agreement on the disputed Christological dogma resulted in full agreement on the faith of the *Horoi* of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, which was recorded mainly in the second *Theological Statement*, apparently in order to facilitate the acceptance of these Councils by the

[21] Ibid.

[22] *Rom.* 8:28.

[23] *Epistle* 113.

[24] *Rom.* 5:5.

Ancient Oriental Churches after the official lifting of the imposed anathemas from each side.

*Third*, the entire theological work of the Joint Commission clearly proved that the Ancient Oriental Churches, although they rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council and/or its decisions, always condemned the heresy of Eutychian Monophysitism and remained firmly attached to the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria, which was the main theological basis of the *Horoi* of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils.

*Fourth*, the rejection by the Ancient Oriental Churches of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and/or its dogmatic decisions, does not mean the rejection of the faith of Chalcedon as was interpreted by the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), but mainly the rejection of their extreme interpretation by the Antiochian theologians during the transitional period of the reception of the Synod of Chalcedon by the ecclesiastical conscience (451-553).

*Fifth*, the theological disputes of this transitional period (451-553), which were also connected with the main *Anathemas* between the two sides, constitute agonizing attempts from both sides for a more authentic expression of the *ecclesial conscience*. At the same time, the Chalcedonians employed the anti-Monophysite *Dyophysite terminology* of the Horos of Chalcedon as the starting-point of their entire Christological doctrine, while the anti-Chalcedonians put forth as an absolute criterion the Miaphysite doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria, by means of which they evaluated the *Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council and the extreme interpretations of it mainly by the Antiochian theologians. The Fifth Ecumenical Council exploited these theological fermentations and projected the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria as the only authentic interpretation of the *Horos* of the Fourth Ecumenical Council.

*Sixth*, the activation of the ecclesial conscience during the transitional period (451-553) for the understanding, interpretation and reception of the faith of Chalcedon covers all the theological disputes, which were expressed within the body of the Church and were combined with a multitude of anathemas pronounced by the adherents and the opponents of the Fourth Ecumenical Council. Nevertheless, these anathemas do not usually indicate an essential differentiation in the main content of Chalcedon, whenever, of course, the disputants agreed on the condemnation of Eutychian Monophysitism. The anathemas pronounced from both sides during this period referred, of course, not to a specific heretical doctrine, but to the acceptance or the rejection of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which, however, had been already placed under the judgment of the ecclesiastical conscience.

*Seventh*, the authentic intervention of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553) for the interpretation of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451) was directed against both the extreme Alexandrian and the extreme Antiochian theologians of the transitional period by means of specific theological theses, which were based on the Christological doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria. Through this interpretation of the Fifth Ecumenical Council the Fourth Ecumenical Council was finally granted to the Church, was enumerated with the previous Ecumenical Synods, and its work finally acquired definitive ecumenical status. Up until the Fifth Ecumenical Council, the enumeration of the Council of

Chalcedon with the other Ecumenical Councils had remained an open ecclesiastical issue.

*Eighth*, the main Anathemas against Dioscorus of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch are differentiated with regard to ecclesiastical authority, but they present common elements with regard to the reasons for their imposition. Dioscorus was anathematized by the Fourth Ecumenical Council, and Severus and his followers by the Endemousas Synods of Constantinople (518 and 536), but the reasons for the imposition of these anathemas were not related to the faith of those condemned. The former was condemned for canonical reasons, while the latter was condemned for rejecting the Fourth Ecumenical Council and disrupting the unity of the Church.

*Ninth*, The Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), although it dealt with the authority of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, conscientiously refrained from renewing, as obviously it had to do, the anathemas against Dioscorus and Severus, because there was no expressed accusation of their deviation towards the heresy of Monophysitism. Nevertheless, the Orthodox tradition connected the anathemas of the Endemousas Synods of Constantinople (518 and 536) against Severus and his followers with the work of the Fifth Ecumenical Council, and this is why the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils renewed the anathema against Severus on the basis of the obvious conviction that he had already been anathematized by the Fifth Ecumenical Council.

*Tenth*, the imposition as well as the circumvention or the lifting of the Anathemas of the Ecumenical Councils is specified by the responsibility for safeguarding the unity of the Church, and this is why the application of economy for this purpose is characterized by St. Cyril as "*a perfect and wise device*", even when it is related to refraining from anathematizing a heretic by an Ecumenical Council. This economy applies much more to the procedure of restoring the unity of the Church according to the settled canonical tradition and practice of the Orthodox Church.

*Eleventh*, the *Pan-Orthodox Synod*, or the unanimous decision of the *Sacred Synods of the local Orthodox Churches*, is the competent ecclesiastical authority for interpreting authentically the decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils and lifting every obstacle for the restoration of the unity of the Church, in accordance with the consistent Orthodox ecclesiology and canonical tradition. The lifting of the Anathemas of Ecumenical Councils for the sake of furthering the unity of the Church lies within the parameters of the uninterrupted operation of the synodal conscience of the Church and is expressed with the canonical synodal agencies of each epoch, such as the lifting of the Anathemas of the Third Ecumenical Council (431) against the disputing members of the rival conventicle of Ephesus which was done by means of a simple agreement in the *Horos of Reconciliation* (433) and without the summoning of an Ecumenical Council.

# The Bilateral Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches: Challenges and the Future

*Metropolitan Emmanuel Adamakis*

*Introduction*

Well before 11th century schism between Eastern and Western Christianity, Christians had been divided by their faith—not as a fatality, which did away with their responsibility, but as the most painful experience of our freedom to understand and interpret the constituent elements of our faith in diverse ways. The division of Christians, which stems from the separation of the Churches, is in profound contradiction to the very nature of the Church, because unity springs from the mystery of communion as its source of regeneration and life.

The term "Eastern Christian" includes, among others, the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches. In our case of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, the fracture line generated by the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451 around the definition of Christological dogmas, estranged these two families of Churches. It was only afterwards that the terminologies evolved along divergent semantic lines. Gradually, from that point on, the Copts, Syriacs, Armenians and also Ethiopians preserved, developed, and affirmed their spiritual, cultural, and other particularities in the face of the Byzantine Empire and the Chalcedonian Christians. In other words, the division was not born of the estrangement but it created the conditions for a certain isolation. Father Jean Meyendorff was of this opinion when he wrote: "The Coptics, the Syro-Jacobites and the Armenians, dedicated to leading a heroic fight for centuries, but isolated as religious minorities in the vast world of Islam, little by little lost the sense of belonging to a larger world than their own. The powerful, yet faraway kingdom of Ethiopia, suffered from the same isolation".[1] It must also be noted that after the Council of Chalcedon, the Chalcedonian Fathers under Byzantium tended to distinguish between a fundamental attachment to the theology of Saint Cyril of Alexandria and its opposite, and this in a highly polemical, if not political, context.

Counter to these polemical positions, we must recognise the full importance of the contributions throughout the centuries of certain figures who worked for the dialogue such as Catholicos Nerses the Gracious in the 12th century, or the Russian Metropolitan Porfyr Uspensky in the 19th century. In the 20th century, contemporary initiatives for dialogue between the Orthodox

[1] Jean Meyendorff, *Unité de l'Empire et divisions des chrétiens* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1993), 395.

Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches evaluated the information on which the persistent division between these Churches is currently based.

The 20th century has witnessed profound changes and attempts at rapprochement of these two Church families (which is part of a general ecumenical dynamic), made possible by theological meetings that were first informal in the 1960s, then official as of the 1980s until today.[2] It is not my intention here, however, to go back over the history of this bilateral dialogue. On the other hand, I must, as Co-President of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, put my finger on what today prevents us from consummating the unity to which we are called, notwithstanding the wonderful progress we have witnessed over the past decades. Because I dare to say so without any ambiguity, this dialogue initiative is certainly what has been closest to the conditions of a Church communion fully regained. Nevertheless, we have not got there yet. By building on this essential heritage, we will be in a position to resume the Ecclesiastical communion of the past. Consequently, aside from an analysis of what the dialogue has achieved as well as its resistances, I propose to concentrate on the prospective challenges on complementary levels: not only theological (that is only Christological in our case), but also canonical, liturgical and pastoral, jurisdictional and ecumenical, before finishing with the conciliar aspect. Only a study of these complementary areas will show us the deposits of an ecclesiastical experience rooted in history and time, of a spiritual experience towards a total communion.

### *1. State of the Theological Dialogue*

The dialogue between Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches immediately placed the Christological question at the heart of its agitations. The latter is by far the most important, because it is on this Christological dispute that the separation began. Since the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), the theological problem surrounding the person and the nature (or the two natures) of Christ has continued to divide the Churches that accepted and received the Council and those that rejected it. The Oriental Orthodox felt that the Council of Chalcedon had not put enough evidence on the Christology of St. Cyril of Alexandria, to whom they wanted to remain faithful. In 1964, the declaration of the Aarhus meeting emphasised the fact that: "In our common study of the Council of Chalcedon, the well-known phrase used by our common Father in Christ, St. Cyril of Alexandria, *mia physis* (or *mia hypostasis*) *tou Theou Logou*

[2] The excerpts from official declarations and documents are quoted from Christine Chaillot, *Towards Unity* (Geneva, 1998). For an exact chronology of the meetings see also Gary Vachicouras, "Historical Survey on the International Bilateral Dialogues of the Orthodox Church," *Christianity in Europe* 3 (2008): 151-190; On the occasion of the main dialogue meetings, the *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR] devoted many analyses to the topic and quoted the articles of eminent theologians such as Nissiotis or Florovsky: "Unofficial Consultation between Theologians of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Chruches, Aarhus, Denmark, August 11-15, 1964," GOTR 10/2 (1964-1965); "Papers and Discussions between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Theologians, The Bristol Consultation, July 25-29 1967," GOTR 13/2 (1968); "Third Unofficial Consultation between Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Theologians, Geneva, August 16-21, 1970," GOTR 16/1-2 (1971).

*sesarkomene* (the one *physis* or *hypostasis* of God's Word Incarnate) with its implications, was at the centre of our conversations. On the essence of the Christological dogma we found ourselves in full agreement. Through the different terminologies used by each side, we saw the same truth expressed. Since we agree in rejecting without reservation the teaching of Eutyches as well as of Nestorius, the acceptance or non-acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon does not entail the acceptance of either heresy. Both sides found themselves fundamentally following the Christological teaching of the one undivided Church as expressed by St. Cyril" (par. 1).

The theologians of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue have confirmed that this Christology was common by the historical Christological statements made in 1989 and 1990. In the 1990 Declaration of Chambésy, the notions of will (θέλημα) and activity (ἐνέργεια) were even spoken of, questions discussed by Eastern Orthodox theologians after the Council of Chalcedon, at the Council of Constantinople in 680-681 (known also as Constantinople III or the Sixth Ecumenical Council): "Both families agree that the Hypostasis of the Logos became composite by uniting to His divine uncreated nature with its natural will and energy, which He has in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit, created human nature, which He assumed at the Incarnation and made His own, with its natural will and energy" (II, par.3). This text emphasises the fact that the theology received by all from Saint Cyril of Alexandria and the *a posteriori* uses of this same theology must not be confused. The Joint Commission unanimously approved the Christology of Saint Cyril of Alexandria common to the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox as the absolute standard for all questions of Christology. The Statement also included formulations of Christological doctrine of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils and also the veneration of icons (II, par. 8). This seemed to put an end to more than 1500 years of separation.

How can we then understand some of the oppositions which have been generated by such agreements? For example, the reaction of the monks of Mount Athos is in this respect symptomatic (Sacred Community of Mount Athos, 1996). They were certainly not the only ones in the 1990s to resist the proclamation of such a possibility of union. Traditionalists of all sides, especially Eastern Orthodox, refused the possibility of communion, emphasising the heretical "monophysite" Christological dimension of the Oriental Orthodox, without making the necessary complementary analysis explained by the theological positions of the statements. However, as Professor Martzelos remarks, the essential difference between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches is not so much Christological, but more based on the refusal by the Oriental Orthodox to accept the Council of Chalcedon, for reasons above all historical, while accepting the Christology and the formulations of this Council, as agreed in the common statements of the bilateral theological dialogue.[3]

[3] G. Martzelos, "Le refus de Chalcédoine exclut-il de l'orthodoxie?" in *Chemins de la christologie orthodoxe*, coll. Jesus and Jesus-Christ 91, ed. A. Argyriou (Paris: Desclée, 2005), 196. This statement and its development are in complete contradiction with the analysis proposed by J.-C. Larchet, for his

So what is this dogmatic debate against the "pre-Chalcedonian" Churches currently about, despite all the very conscientious work carried out by the official group of theologians from the two families and the agreements made about the Christology of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon and the Christology of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, our common Father? The position of the Athonite monks and other circles reveals the resistance that exists inside the Eastern Orthodox Church more generally in terms of the ecumenical dialogue. Their fears consist in seeing the Orthodox Church unite with Churches that they think to be monophysite. These fears are less the result of an opposition over the strictly dogmatic/Christological parts of the dialogue—although they take up the arguments of Saint John Damascene in his work *Concerning Heresy* (PG 94, 741A)—than over the fact that the union with the monophysites would also imply solving other numerous questions at the canonical, pastoral and liturgical levels that I will address subsequently in more detail. These pockets of resistance *de facto* call into question the competence and the authority of the commission of theologians chosen officially by their respective Churches for this dialogue to address a topic as sensitive and important as the dogmatic learning received by the ecclesiastical conscience. In this matter, I follow completely without deviation my predecessor as co-president of the commission of the theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, Metropolitan Damaskinos (Papandreou) of Switzerland of blessed memory. According to him, this commission only has a mandate to make proposals that should, later on, be discussed and accepted by the different Churches and their Synods. In this respect, what is more appropriate than to submit these proposals at the Pan-Orthodox Council that is to be held in 2016?[4] This will be part of my conclusion.

To come back to the Christological aspect of the agreed statements proposed by the Commission, some complain that the studies carried out on this topic by the commission of theologians representing the two families of the Church are neither comprehensive nor sufficient. Yet, I will repeat, it would appear evident in these statements that, "the Christological teaching of the aforementioned fragments from the two joint statements [1989 and 1990] is not only Orthodox, but also clearly adapted to the terminology of the dogmatic decisions of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils: this makes any reservation completely unfounded, irrespective of where it comes from, concerning the acceptance by the old Oriental Orthodox Churches of the faith of the dogmatic definitions (*Horoi*) of the aforementioned ecumenical Councils" (*Episkepsis* 516 (1995) 13). However, because of certain resistance mentioned above, pursuit of the theological dialogue is necessary, not so much to reach a general agreement on Christology (which has already been accomplished during the dialogue) but to perfect the texts of understanding on Christology as well as to reflect on this ecumenical theological study within the framework of the ecclesiastical and universal experience, which is specific to the unity of the Church (according to Orthodox rules). Because, as Father Georges Florovsky

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part. Cf. *Personne et nature. La Trinité – Le Christ – L'homme. Contribution aux dialogue interorthodoxe et interchrétien contemporain* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011).

[4] [Editor's note:] Unfortunately this has not been the case.

writes: "In reality (...) the power of Christian unity resides precisely in the unity of faith, within the Unity of the Church".[5]

*2. Canonical Perspective*

The canonical problem is concentrated around the lifting of anathemas, and in particular around the necessary authority to do so. The 1990 Joint Commission statement mentioned that: "Both families agree that all the anathemas and condemnation of all the anathemas and condemnations of the past which now divide us should be lifted by the Churches in order that the last obstacle to the full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and the power of God. Both families agree that the lifting of the anathemas and condemnations will be consummated on the basis that the councils and the fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical" (par.10).

How do we reconnect with those that history, by conciliar decision, has condemned without betraying the decisions of the Fathers of the Church, or even the ecclesiastical conscience, which has recognised a number of persons, otherwise considered as saints by some, as not belonging to the ecclesiastical corpus? This is an especially crucial question because it is at the juncture between canonical law and liturgy. This Gordian Knot obliges us to approach the topic in all its complexity and to deconstruct its characteristics. A central question then arises: who has the necessary authority to lift the conciliar condemnations laid down by the Fathers of the Church as a manifestation of ecclesiastical conscience? Is it sufficient, as proposed by the Joint Commission, to recognise the seven Ecumenical Councils as having a different authority, which allows acceptance of the dogmas of faith and not the disciplinary elements? As proposed by the Joint Commission of the dialogue, is it sufficient to recognise that it be done on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathemised or condemned are not heretics? (Statement 1990 par. 10).[6] "Both families agree that all the anathemas and condemnations of the past that now divide us should be lifted by the Churches in order that the last obstacle to the full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God. Both families agree that the lifting of the anathemas and condemnations will be consummated on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathemised or condemned are not heretical". In 1993, the Commission of the dialogue also said that: "(...) The lifting of anathemas and condemnations of the past can be consummated on the basis of their common acknowledgement of the fact that the Councils and Fathers previously anathemized or condemned are Orthodox in their teachings (...) The lifting of anathemas should be made unanimously and simultaneously by the Heads of all the Churches of both sides, through the signing of an appropriate ecclesiastical Act, the content of which will include acknowledgement from each side that the

[5] *Dialogue of Love. Breaking the Silence of Centuries*, ed. John Chryssavgis (NY: Fordham University Press, 2014), 69.

[6] *Toward Unity*, 64.

other one is Orthodox in all respects" (par. 2).[7] Furthermore, in a particularly relevant study of the canonical challenges of the dialogue, Erickson answered the question that asks who has the authority to lift the anathemas: "An anathema can be lifted, but only by a body of the same or greater authority as the one which imposed it. (...) From this juridical perspective, only another ecumenical council would have the authority to lift the anathemas imposed by councils four through seven, though in a pinch presumably a Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church would do—when and if such a council meets".[8]

The door to reconciliation is therefore not altogether shut, but it will be difficult to open. The canon, in its sense of limit, constitutes a dimension of the Church's frontiers.[9] The anathema of heretics in its own way contributes to the definition of an exteriority of the Church in opposition to sanctity as an inclusive ecclesiastical phenomenon. To paraphrase Saint Nicolas Cabasilas, the Church is signified in the sacraments and the Church is as much manifest in the saints.[10] We then understand better that the anathemas are not only under the remit of a simple juridical approach, they are also a dimension of the ecclesiastical conscience as a reality of the 'one' Church and an experience of communion. The memorandum of Mount Athos of 1995 is not wrong in this sense to emphasise this difficulty, even if it encompasses it with the greatest rigidity.

In this context, is a solution then possible? Yes, if we consider with Erickson that the anathemas can only be considered based on the dogmatic context in which they have been produced. Therefore, it is interesting to become aware of the shortcut often used by conciliar writers between anathemised people and the heretical doctrine they promote. "In other words, a kind of theological 'short-hand' develops. Instead of anathematizing a heretical position, which may be rather cumbersome to summarize and explain, we give this position a name and anathematize it as a heresy—Arianism or Nestorianism—or, more often, we associate it with a specific person and anathematize him—Arius or Nestorius".[11] This distinction is essential to understand, because it opens up the possibility of reconciliation between ecclesiastical identities, by condemning the heresy itself and not the people wrongly accused of heresy. Theologians are therefore called upon to study the necessary dissociation between people, in our case Dioscorus and Severus, and the heresies with which their names have become synonymous, not at Chalcedon (451), but at the Third Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (681) in the context of the crisis against mono-thelitism. Let us emphasise here once again, that the Patriarch Dioscorus of Alexandria was not deposed at Chalcedon for heresy (a dogmatic reason) but for indiscipline (a canonical reason), since he did notattend the council even though the Council Fathers had asked him three times to present himself.

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[7] *Toward Unity*, 68.

[8] J. Erickson, "Beyond Dialogue: The Quest for Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Unity Today" (2000) (http://www.svots.edu/content/beyond-dialogue-quest-eastern-and-oriental-orthodox-unity-today) (last accessed May, 2016).

[9] See Georges Florovsky, "The limits of the Church," *The Church Quarterly Review* 117 (1933): 117-131.

[10] Nicolas Cabasilas, *Interpretation of the Divine Liturgy*, Chap. 38, 231.

[11] Erickson, "Beyond Dialogue."

In the light of these two simple evocations, which need to be examined in more depth, and by extension of the works of the Joint Commission of the dialogue, the inter-Orthodox commission of the dialogue, which met at Chambésy (Switzerland) in 2005, emphasised the necessity to: "Highlight, through special studies: a) the Cyrillian basis of the dogmatic definition issued from the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils; b) the ecclesiological importance that is given to the recognition of these Councils and their official numbering among the Ecumenical Councils, and c) the importance that is attributed to the lifting of anathemas for the re-establishment of ecclesiastical communion. These questions pre-suppose a minute and comprehensive examination of the theological heritage of the two traditions and the clarification of Christological terminology". The idea is therefore to bring to light how the lifting of anathemas does not call into question the authority and the legitimacy of past conciliar decisions, in particular on an ecumenical scale, but the way in which it can also extend the constituent elements of the ecclesiastical conscience. We therefore move from a theological stance of defence to the validation of a particular heritage in connection with the general pluralism of Church life.

*3. Management of Liturgical Pluralism and Pastoral Determinism*

Orthodoxy is not only about dogmas, but it is also a question of liturgical practice. Likewise, the dialogue between our Churches cannot be content only with agreeing on faith. We must work, similarly, based on the ecclesiastical conscience in its liturgical and pastoral expression. Prayers that are said during the liturgies and the other offices are the very expression of our faith and our life in the Church.

The controversial spirit that prevailed during the centuries crystallised the difference between certain liturgical practices making them incompatible. This is, for example, the case for the use of unleavened bread in Armenian liturgy. Another liturgical practice that divides is the addition of the theopaschist formula, "who was crucified for us", in the *Trisagion* of Armenian liturgy.[12] Coming back to the use of unleavened bread we do not really know how such a habit came into being, it is certain that in the 6th century, at the time of the division and the sectarian clashes after Chalcedon, unleavened bread became a symbol of the opposition between the Byzantine and Armenian Churches, before transforming into a stumbling block touching even the Christological level. To be convinced, one just needs to read the work by Garsoian[13] that tells of this state of affairs, or even, as Erickson[14] remarks, the decisions of the Council *in Tullo* (691-692) that declare in its 11th canon: "May none of those who are in the ranks of the clergy, or even a lay person, eat the unleavened bread in use with the Jews(...); if any person attempts to do so, may he be deposed if clergy, and

[12] R. Janin, *Eglises orientales et rites orientaux* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1955), 338.

[13] Nina Garsoïan, *L'église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient* (Lovanii: Peeters, 1999).

[14] J. Erickson, "Beyond Dialogue: The Quest for Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Unity Today."

excommunicated if laical". The controversy took on more breadth as it extended in opposition to the Latin Church.

As liturgical practice became the subject of controversy, or even a space for theological divergence, original liturgical pluralism in the life of the Church was gradually denied, although being legitimate. The spirit of controversy makes the differences essential, while dialogue enables us to understand their historical developments and the theological appropriation that often comes later.

The principle of accepting the different Oriental Orthodox liturgies, as old and historical as the Byzantine *ordo*, enables us to appreciate the diversity of expression of divine worship of the cultures and languages of the first apostolic Churches. The real question today is whether we are all capable of accepting the differences and multiplicity of the liturgical texts and practices of the two families of Churches (Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox) in the context of the *lex orandi/lex credendi*, which says that we pray what we believe and *vice versa*. In other words, are liturgical practices not reconcilable?

This is the reason why the work of the theological dialogue between the two families of Churches must, in my opinion, be aware of the study and training of liturgical frameworks. The liturgical study weeks, at the Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe Saint-Serge (Paris), have contributed to this deepening of our knowledge for sixty years. Furthermore, the Joint Sub-commission of dialogue, which took an interest in liturgical questions in 1998, has come up with a solution that could be acceptable. It recommends maintaining the liturgical practices of the different Churches because they form the rich and plural reality of their coexistence. At the same time, the detailed study of all these liturgies will show a Christology acceptable and received by all, in respect of the dialectic of Saint Irenaeus of Lyon between faith and Eucharist (*Adv. Haereses*, 4, 18, 8). FitzGerald puts it another way: "Unity in the Apostolic Faith does not mean the destruction of legitimate diversity in liturgical practices, customs, art and languages. Ultimately, this process will affirm not only that the Church manifests the Apostolic Faith but also that the Church is truly universal".[15]

In the future, to signify the unity of the two families of Churches (Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox), while considering the legitimacy of the diverse liturgical practices, we should also reflect on the circulation of the clergy and the faithful between different sectarian traditions.

The Eucharistic unity towards which we strive and ultimately reach should enable the participation of the faithful of the two families of Churches to take part in the liturgy and receive the Eucharist, without discrimination of ecclesiastical origin. The concelebration of the clergy of the two families should be established with measure because of the differences in *ordo*, as well as in language. Because the coexisting liturgical movement between the two families of Churches would not be easily organised, during a common celebration, it would be fitting, no doubt, to then respect the liturgical customs of the clergy in a given tradition and place, while remaining very attentive to the circulation of the clergy

[15] Thomas FitzGerald, "Toward the Reestablishment of Full Communion: The Orthodox-Orthodox Oriental Dialogue," GOTR 36/2 (1991): 169-188, here at 180.

between the two families of Churches. The question of training therefore forcefully arises. On this topic, in 1991, the Greek Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch signed an agreement for a common experience of pastoral, liturgical and Eucharistic life in many respects between the clergy and the faithful of both families of the Church.

There is also a non-negligible psycho-affective and identity-related dimension, a particularly sensitive point of the dialogue, that of community belonging, which remains a dimension of the limits of the Church in the meaning of Florovsky.[16] Certainly, we must accept that there is identity in ecclesiastical belonging. However, this identity aspect cannot and must not substitute, as is too often the case, for universal ecclesiastical conscience that is far more open and cosmic than our human categories. In Church history, voices arose throughout the centuries to remind us of the importance of universal ecclesiastical conscience, like that of the Armenian Catholicos Saint Nerses in the 12th century.

At the pastoral level, in an extreme situation, such as that of the 1915 genocide, let us recall that the Armenians, having escaped it, could, at the request of the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople Zaven (1913-1922) and with the approval of the Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, receive the sacraments, in particular baptisms and marriages, from the hands of Greek clerics.

### *5. Questions of Jurisdiction*

Here I pursue my considered approach with questions of jurisdiction, because there is no use in remaining paralysed before the sleepy silence of the *fait accompli*. As many authors have pertinently remarked about inter-Churches relations, the question of ecclesiastical jurisdictions is a central aspect of the life of the Church, both on an institutional and "communional" level. It seems essential to me that from the Eucharistic ecclesiology that the Eastern Orthodox Church has developed throughout the 20th century we are capable of giving a consistency to the ecumenical dialogue in which we participate. But this is not simply a speculative thought. It is the duty of those who are engaged in the dialogue to anticipate the practical shapes that our Church could take, in the context of this article, in which Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox would be united. Paradoxically, in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the emergence of a Eucharistic and territorial ecclesiology in the 20th century has been based on a fragmentary and dispersed reality, in the context of the diaspora. Father Nicolas Affanasieff, then Metropolitan John of Pergamon, in developing a territorial reading of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, has at the same time highlighted the new issue of de-territorialisation that is the organisation of Orthodox communities outside its traditional and historical spaces, the structural driver of which is ethno-religious belonging.

In this respect, the Oriental Orthodox Churches have more or less followed the same migratory rationales as Eastern Orthodox Churches. Dialogue

[16] Florovsky, "The Limits of the Church".

and the prospect of unity between these Churches pose a twofold problem surrounding the future of its common jurisdictional organisation: a) claims on the same traditional and historical territory—which is particularly the case with the patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria—and b) the simultaneous presence of these Churches in the diaspora.

The latter scenario (b) is no doubt not the most complicated to resolve, because Oriental Orthodox communities could be integrated into the Episcopal assemblies that already exist (in Europe and elsewhere) according to the decisions of the Chambésy Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (2009), which organise the inter-Orthodox work in the diaspora, in a transitory manner. This integration of the two families of Churches would further assert a message of a certain oneness of Christianity in the world within a pluralism of expressions, as well as the common ecclesiastical testimony of the good news of Christ resurrected. It would also strengthen the cohesion of what we generically call "Eastern Christians" to make these communities, united within a single ecclesiastical communion, a real force in host societies. In France, Germany, or Italy, for example, the union of Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches would create a demographical presence in the neighbourhood of more than one million faithful. And their number would be very high also in continents like North and South America, not forgetting Australia.

On the other hand, the first scenario mentioned, (a), is much more complex, because it requires the recognition of what Archimandrite Papathomas,[17] canonist, calls 'multi-jurisdictional co-territoriality' and is equivalent to fragmenting the territory along the lines of an ethno-faith and not a Eucharistic rationale. However, if the subject of the canonist's reflection was constructed based on diasporic space, the same would apply in the context of so-called traditional ecclesiastical jurisdictions. To be more specific, how can we appraise ecclesiastical unity on a jurisdictional scale in the context of Churches already established over time? The meetings of Aarhus (1964), Bristol (1967), and Geneva (1970) had already foreseen the problem with foreboding. The communiqué of the Switzerland meeting emphasised in particular: 'It is recognised that jurisdiction is not to be regarded only as an administrative matter, but that it also touches on the question of ecclesiology in some aspects. The traditional pattern of territorial autonomy or autocephaly has its own pragmatic, as well as theological, justification. The manifestation of local unity in the early centuries was to have one bishop, with one college of presbyters united in one Eucharist. In more recent times pragmatic considerations, however, have made it necessary in some cases to have more than one bishop and one Eucharist in one city, but it is important that the norm required by the nature of the Church be safe guarded at least in principle and expressed in Eucharistic Communion and in local conciliar structures" (par. 6.c). Let us note that, despite its importance, this question was not taken up in later discussions. Furthermore, the transitory solution proposed by the Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (2009) is not supposed to be applied within the framework of

[17] G. Papathomas, "La relation oppositionnelle entre Église établie localement et 'Diaspora' ecclésiale," *Contacts* 210 (2005): 96-132.

canonical territories, and if it were, it would justify the *de facto* recognition of an ecclesiological paradigm non-compatible with the ecclesiology of communion to which the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox remain particularly attached.

Instead of attempting to give ready-made answers to an issue, which goes far beyond our initiative of bilateral dialogue, I allow myself to ask these questions (cf. consultation between Catholics and Orthodox in North America in 2010): what limits to the recognition of the Churches' authority and jurisdiction should be recognised? Who has the authority to define such limits? How will the communion of the Churches be organised? Is Canon 34 of the Apostles still applicable in the context of this dialogue? Should the diptychs (the order of honour of the Local Churches) be reorganised?

In the mid-term, however, the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches could find themselves in a conciliar framework that could enable them to find the conditions of a territorial ecclesiology of communion. A certain form of jurisdictional canonical economy could then be observed inside the ecclesiastical space of local Churches. But I am happy to leave it up to the future work of the Joint Commission to address these important and thorny issues that must not be left hanging as they tell in their own way of the unity for which we are looking. Yet, I would like to recall these conclusive words of Father Verghese who wrote in 1971: "The statement would also say that at least for the time being, the jurisdictions would remain distinct on the basis of the different liturgical traditions, e.g. the two Patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria, as well as of Constantinople could continue with their different jurisdictions. The hope should be expressed in the statement that as mutual confidence grows between the various liturgical traditions a reorganization of the jurisdictions would become possible. Clear assurances can be given to certain churches that entering into communion with another church will not violate its administrative or jurisdictional integrity".[18]

### *6. Bilateral and Multilateral Ecumenical Dialogue*

It seems as decisive to me to understand the place of the theological dialogue we are looking at within the broader framework of the ecumenical movement. The proximity of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches due to the centrality given to theology, patristic and canonical traditions, liturgical life, its attachment to monasticism and spirituality, have made it possible to take common stances in ecumenical dialogue. They have formed a front with traditional emphasis against the liberal trends of modern ecumenism. They are also considered as a single Orthodox family within the World Council of Churches (WCC). The quest for unity has highlighted many points of theological convergence which, in parallel, distance us from other Christian faiths. Therefore, the common declaration of September 1990 emphasises the fact that: "There are crucial issues in which our two families agree fundamentally and have disagreements with the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. We could

[18] P. Verghese, "Ecclesiological Issues concerning the Relation of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches," GOTR 16 (1971): 133-143.

organize small joint consultations on issues like: (a) the position and role of women in the life of the Church and our common Orthodox response to the contemporary problem of other Christian communities concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood; (b) pastoral care for mixed marriages between Orthodox and heterodox Christians; (c) marriages between Orthodox Christians and members of other religions; (d) the Orthodox position on dissolution or annulment of marriage, divorce and separation of married couples; (e) abortion" (par.11). More specifically, the list of synergies on the ecumenical scene does not stop there. It also mentions the question of uniatism, which affects both families of Churches (par.13).

Here we reach an issue central to the ecumenical dialogue, i.e., the interplay between bilateral and multilateral scales. To put it another way, there is an ecumenism with several speeds. The bilateral dialogues are favourable to the creation of great rapprochements, or even courageous synergies. Therefore, in the frame of our bilateral dialogue, the evolution of the memory of the two ecclesiastical traditions moves us from the theological polemical era of the past, to a desire for unity today, through dialogue. The resistances of the past have made our common spiritual mission distract us from our spiritual and important mission, that of reaching unity. Today, we are living in nostalgia for our unity with open minds, to reach reconciliation and unity as asked by Christ Himself. As was said several times by Metropolitan Damaskinos, such an active co-president in our dialogue for several years, this bilateral dialogue has grown very rapidly and was supported enthusiastically by the two Church families. Today we must continue our dialogue with the same enthusiasm as in these times, at the beginning of our dialogue.

The proximity that we have reached today between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, therefore, requires that we coordinate more effectively our efforts, also in ecumenical arenas. For this we have to proclaim a common voice, according to the Gospel. We certainly have lost a bit of fervour, if not the ardour, of those involved in ecumenism in the 1960s, a period during which the theological ferment brought no faint hope of concretely seeing unity. But it is within the institutional forum of ecumenism that major meetings have been made possible. The World Council of Churches, within the framework of the Faith Commission and Constitution, enabled such theological agitation. However, does the development of the main ecumenical forums such as the World Council of Churches and the Conference of European Churches, to give only two examples, still enable us to envisage the ecumenical future in as positive a light? The question arises with all the more relevance as certain contradictory ecumenical trends develop fracture lines, determining even more than in the 1960s the strengthening of exclusive ecumenical solidarities. Similarly, the recent political reconfigurations in the Middle East created the conditions for a certain marginalisation of the ecumenical dialogue in favour of a concerted response

from the Churches to the disappearance of Eastern Christians in the shadow of an Islamism gaining ground at full speed.[19]

At a time when the presence of Christians in the Middle East is endangered by the innumerable political or geopolitical upheavals, which affect the region, the prospect of unity between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches seems more crucial than ever before. The tragedy currently playing out before our eyes should awaken our consciences.

*Conclusion: Dialogue, a Vital Element of the Pan-Orthodox Council*

We owe to the great pioneer of ecumenism, ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras (1948-1972), a profound change in the dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox. He was certainly one of the first to courageously envisage a deeper stance with respect to these old apostolic sister Churches, later than their simple marginalisation as "monophysites". From 1951, on the occasion of the 1500th anniversary of the Council of Chalcedon, as Thomas FitzGerald recalls, the Ecumenical Patriarch accepted that "those who do not accept the terminology of Chalcedon are 'nevertheless Orthodox in all things'" (1991) after an expression used by Saint John Damascene (PG 94, 741) and studied perfectly by Professor Martzelos.[20]

As I have written elsewhere, the ecumenical commitment of the Eastern Orthodox Church fits within a preconciliarly process led with strength by the same Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras.[21] But, it must be understood generally as a concomitant process of ecumenical responsibility and commitment on a Pan-Orthodox level. One and the other cannot be disassociated, as the Patriarchal encyclical letters of 1902 and 1920 recall, as well as the Pan-Orthodox conferences of Rhodes of the 1960s. Following these meetings, the milestones for the creation of a Joint Commission were launched for the dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches. I also fully share the enthusiasm of the Third pre-conciliar Pan-Orthodox conference of Chambésy (1986) that comments on the Oriental Orthodox Churches: "The Third pre-conciliar Pan-Orthodox conference commends with great satisfaction the recent opening of this dialogue, and is delighted in the choice of Christology as the first theme to examine. The prospects of this dialogue allow us to hope with some basis that the solutions found in common to the questions concerning the 'horos' of the 4th Ecumenical Council, in close relation too with the Christological decisions of the other ecumenical councils, and the means leading to the acceptance of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, to the lifting of anathemas pronounced on both sides etc. In any case, the dialogue in question would be strengthened if we studied and tried also to resolve in parallel the common pastoral problems, as the two Church families live in the same

[19] A. Fleyfel, *Géopolitique des chrétiens d'Orient* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013); J.-F. Colosimo, *Les hommes en trop. La malédiction des chrétiens d'Orient* (Paris: Fayard, 2014); C. Chaillot, *Les Coptes d'Egypte. Discriminations et persécutions 1970-2011* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014).

[20] Martzelos, "Le refus de Chalcédoine exclut-il de l'orthodoxie?"

[21] Métropolite Emmanuel and Cardinal Kurt Koch, *L'esprit de Jérusalem* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2014), 20.

milieu and have common ecclesiastical presuppositions; two elements which may contribute to the solution to these problems".

Nevertheless, these very different reactions of the Churches to the givens of this dialogue confirm that this question must be asked within the framework of the Pan-Orthodox council (2016). On a personal level, I would like it to be the case. Because when the ecclesiastical conscience expresses itself, it can only do so in the name of the spirit of communion behind it. We must be in agreement that here we are positing acts of recognition of a common ecclesiastical experience, which is legitimate in its various expressions, accepting that a full and integral agreement on our Orthodox faith becomes the ferment for any communion that identifies with the unity of the 'single, sacred, universal and apostolic Church'.

In 2005, a theological inter-Orthodox Committee for the dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches met at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva. The communiqué issued at the end of the meeting covers the main point of interest: 1. This dialogue is essential, as it fits within the prospect of the preparation of the Pan-Orthodox Council and must be furthered both within the framework of commissions and sub-commissions and on a liturgical and pastoral level. It must enable the systematic evaluation of critiques made of the theological texts drafted by the Commission. In this way, we will be in a position to answer the strongest polemical arguments. 2. We must plan the next stages of the dialogue, taking into account the critiques made by the different dialogue stakeholders, taking into account the reticence of the local Churches and the Holy Mountain (Mount Athos) to receive the joint declarations on Christology and its direct consequence, ecclesiology. 3. Recognition of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, while lifting the anathemas in order to enable the restoration of ecclesial communion. Intense work on theological vocabulary and Christological terminology is necessary. Similarly, the question of the lifting of the anathemas must be furthered. 4. It is essential to plan the next steps of this dialogue. It would be fitting to update all the material available into a single volume, promoting the work of the Committee and the two pastoral and liturgical sub-Committees. The assessment of the nature and authority of these texts is as important as their synodal reception. The steps to come must also be taken into consideration: regular meetings between the different primates of our Churches, exchanges between teachers at theological institutions and students, meetings between monks, the strengthening of cooperative relations between the clerics of the different Churches in the context of modernity and the more systematic use of the media to clarify the common theological stances promoted by the dialogue. These different elements were taken up lately at the meeting of a work group of the Joint Commission on 24 and 25 November 2014, which met in Athens,[22] pointing out the very high priority of this dialogue as well as calling for a systematic evaluation of all the theological critiques on the proposals of the Joint Commission and for a theological defense against all prejudices and

[22] http://www.metropolegrecque.fr/2014/11/groupe-de-travail-de-la-commission-mixte-pour-le-dialogue-entre-les-eglises-orthodoxes-et-les-eglise.html (last accessed, December 2, 2014).

polemical arguments. I am convinced that we can rely on a twofold Pan-Orthodox and bilateral dynamic to advance our goal of unity.

But I emphasise the fact that even if the purpose of our different ecumenical dialogues truly seeks the re-establishment of unity in and through communion, the sustainability of the state of unity regained will doubtless be as demanding. This is why it is fitting, based on the Eucharistic experience, to find together the conditions of a new experience of unity to be built over time, because all the pockets of resistance I mentioned throughout this modest presentation are as much encouragements to deepen the mystery of the Church, in oneness. This mystery is part of the soteriological experience of a Christ, man and God, dead and resurrected. This bilateral dialogue between our Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches can only take place in the light of salvation, passing from death/disunion to life/unity. For the purpose of achieving our dialogue we must work with patience, courage, and determination, always and all together.

# The Development of the Eastern-Oriental Orthodox Dialogue: The Experience of the Moscow Patriarchate

*Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev*

For the first time in the one and a half thousand years since the Fourth Ecumenical Council the topic of mutual relations between the Orthodox and Ancient Eastern (Oriental Orthodox) Churches was officially raised during the Pan-Orthodox Consultations of 1961 to 1962. A direct consequence of the fruitful discussions, in which the Russian Orthodox Church took a direct participation from the very beginning (and equally in the subsequent dialogue), was the holding of a series of unofficial Eastern-Oriental Orthodox theological consultations, using the World Council of Churches as a base: in 1964 in Aarhus, Denmark; in 1967 in Bristol, Great Britain; in 1970 in Geneva, Switzerland; and in 1971 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In the meetings, along with the well-known differences in the sphere of Christology and ecclesiology, there was noted a shared perception of the "true tradition of the One Church",[1] and voice was lent to the similarities in "worship and the spiritual life, doctrine and canonical practice, the understanding of the Holy Trinity, the incarnation, the person and action of the Holy Spirit, the nature of the Church the saints and sacraments, and the life of the age to come".[2]

During the most active period of the work of the Mixed Theological Commission on Dialogue from 1985 to 1993 both sides examined a host of strictly scholarly-theological, pastoral and practical issues. The result of the dialogue was the adoption by the Commission in 1990 of a "Second General Declaration and Proposal to the Churches". It reflected the dogmatic formulations on the basis of which there was examined the possibility of removing the mutual anathemas and the restoration of Eucharistic communion.[3]

The documents produced were offered for examination by the hierarchies of all Churches who were participants in the dialogue. However, in the long run on the Eastern Orthodox side, full agreement with them was expressed only by the synods of the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Romania. A subject analysis of the materials from the sessions of the Mixed

[1] From the Joint Decision adopted according to the results of the 3rd non-official Eastern-Oriental Orthodox Consultation (Geneva, 16-21 August, 1970).

[2] Ibid.

[3] In particular, it was agreed that "the Oriental Orthodox may continue to adhere to their traditional Cyrilian terminology on the one nature of the incarnate Word since they take this to be the ineffable consubstantiality of the Word which Eutyches rejected; the Oriental Orthodox are agreed that the Byzantine Orthodox have the right to apply the formula 'two natures' since they agree to distinguish then in a 'single perception'; both families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils, while the Oriental Orthodox also believe that the teaching of the following Councils of the Orthodox Church to be their interpretation and react positively to it".

Commission of 1989-1990, in particular, showed that the suggested text entitled "Proposals on the mutual removal of anathemas" did not presuppose the unconditional acceptance by the Oriental Orthodox Churches of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils and their dogmatic definitions without any interpretative compromise formulations on their part. This was pointed out by the Synodal Committee for Dogmatic and Canonical problems of the Orthodox Church of Greece (1994) and the Holy Community of Mount Athos (1995), who expressed their sharp disagreement with the final documents of the Mixed Commission.

It is essential to clarify that one of the most problematic issues that needs further work are the Christological aspects of the theology of Severus of Antioch, to wit:

1. Severus' recognition of Christ's human nature as individualized and separate from that of the rest of humanity;

2. Severus' rejection of the idea of the *theosis* of humanity;

3. Severus' interpretation, unacceptable from the Eastern Orthodox perspective, of the formula of St. Cyril of Alexandria of the "one incarnate nature of God the Word" as "one mixed nature";

4. Severus' understanding of Christ's humanity as a passive principle not possessing its own action.

As a result, approval of the final documents of the Mixed Commission was postponed and the work of the multilateral Eastern-Oriental Orthodox dialogue (although the issue of convoking a planned meeting of a session of the Mixed Commission—the last time at a meeting of the Joint Working Group in November 2014 in Athens, Greece—has often been raised) has in effect been suspended.

At the same time, over the two and a half decades since the adoption of the last Joint Declaration, active theological work has continued in the Russian Orthodox Church on studying the documents of the dialogue. Thus, from 1994 to 1997 these materials were analyzed by the Synodal Biblical-Theological Commission, whose recommendations formed the basis of the corresponding decision of the Bishops' Council of 1997 according to which the 1993 statement "ought not to be viewed as the definitive document for the restoration of full communion between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches as it contains elements of a lack of clarity in certain Christological formulations" was made.[4] It was in this regard that it was recognised as essential to clarify them "during the study of questions of a liturgical, pastoral and canonical nature, as well as questions relating to the restoration of church communion (...)"[5] For its part, the Bishops' Council of 2000 recognized that the work done by the Synodal Biblical-Theological Commission was useful and confirmed "the need for the further study of the Christological and other problems that are part of the agenda of the Mixed Commission, as well as the usefulness of establishing bilateral dialogues between the Russian Orthodox Church and with the separate

[4] From the decision of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church on the report of the Synodal Biblical-Theological Commission, Moscow, 18-23 February, 1997.

[5] Ibid.

Oriental Orthodox Churches with the goal of clarifying the positions formulated earlier which cannot be seen to be as defining".[6]

In accordance with these decisions, in the 2000s there were held a number of meaningful theological consultations between the Russian Orthodox Church on the one hand and the Coptic, Syrian Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic (Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia) Churches on the other. The participants were generally agreed that the meetings in this format were called upon, without casting doubt on the significance of the Eastern-Oriental Orthodox dialogue, to give a new impulse to the further mutual study of the theological traditions of both ecclesiastical families.

A separate and extremely important place in the bilateral contacts of the Moscow Patriarchate is occupied by the dialogue, begun in 2001, with the Armenian Apostolic Church (Catholicosate of Holy Etchmiadzin). Regular theological discussions and the exchange of experience, mainly in the sphere of church-state and church-society relations, is of particular value not only as a labour for the good of Christian unity, but also as a contribution to the cause of the development of the historically close and genuinely fraternal relations between Russia and Armenia, in other words between the Russian and Armenian nations.

In recent years it has been the development of the bilateral dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Oriental Churches that has undergone practical transformation. In particular, during the visit to Russia in the autumn of 2014 of the Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II and his meeting with His Holiness Patriarch Cyril of Moscow and All Russia, agreement was reached on the creation of a corresponding Bilateral Commission (a similar agreement is being prepared with the Syrian Orthodox Church). Quite recently, from 5$^{th}$ to 7$^{th}$ of February 2016, its first session was successfully held in Cairo, according to the results of which there were defined the priority directions of co-operation for the foreseeable future in the sphere of academic interaction and student-teacher exchanges, in the field of scholarly theological consultations, the study of monastic traditions, pilgrimages, church social ministry (*diakonia*) and church-society relations. A number of joint thematic projects were also agreed upon, the realization of which is expected in the near future.

For the part of the Moscow Patriarchate, apart from the Synodal Biblical-theological Commission and the coordinating role played by the Department for External Church Relations, involved in this work are the Synodal Department for Charity and Social Ministry, the Study Committee, and the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Institute for Post-Graduate Studies and other theological schools which hold a wide spectrum of scholarly and educational events (international conferences and symposia, publications of a historical-theological and mass media nature).

These and other projects undoubtedly help both the hierarchy, clergy and the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church to be become acquainted with the relevant problems and development of the dialogue with the Oriental

[6] From the decision of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church on the report of the Synodal Biblical-Theological Commission, Moscow, 13-16 August, 2000.

Churches, encouraging them to study church history more attentively, the works of the holy fathers (including Cyril of Alexandria, Maximus the Confessor, John Damascene and others) and the works of the key representatives of non-Chalcedonian theology (Severus of Antioch, Dioscorus of Alexandria and others). In its turn this study presupposes an understanding of the liturgical, cultural and linguistic heritage of the Ancient Churches of the East, enabling the establishment of not only ever more new working contacts, but also of friendship and, as a result, ever greater mutual understanding with their representatives. It is in this sense that the Moscow Patriarchate already has a rich pre-history of such mutual interaction—indeed, it was the Russian Orthodox Church throughout her history that has played the role of protector and defender of the Christian East, remarkable examples of which are, for example, the work of the Imperial Orthodox Society of Palestine and the Russian Spiritual Mission in Jerusalem, the works of Bishop Kirill (Naumov) and Archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin), the activities of Bishop Porphyrius (Uspensky) on bringing the Russian Church closer to the Coptic Church and professor B. A. Turaev on bringing the Russian Church closer to the Church of Ethiopia.

Finally, an important role is played today by the combining of efforts in the cause of resisting the militant expressions of Christianophobia which have assumed the proportions of mass terror directed at the ancient native Christian population of the Middle East. Before our eyes genocide is being carried out and we are witnessing a huge humanitarian catastrophe, the innocent victims of which include many faithful of both the Byzantine and Oriental Orthodox Churches: whole families and populations have been forcibly driven from the land of their ancestors and have fallen captive, enduring violence, humiliation and scorn, and often accepting a martyr's death with the name of Christ the Saviour on their lips. A great number of clergy and monastics have suffered at the hands of evildoers—we still do not know of the fate of the Metropolitans Paul of Aleppo (Antiochian Orthodox Church) and Gregory John Ibrahim (Syrian Orthodox Church), kidnapped in Syria in April 2013.

These and other terrible challenges to our contemporary world leave us with no other choice than to bear eloquent witness together to the truth, uncomfortable for many, of what is happening in the land of what was once the cradle of Christian civilization and of what in the near future may threaten the "enlightened secular" world should the international community refuse to undertake an immediate, coordinated, decisive and uncompromising fight against this evil.

But the primary foundation for our fraternal relations and ardent striving for unity is undoubtedly a united faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one unsurpassed Gospel values and the one uninterrupted succession of apostolic tradition, to which we have been and remain true.

# About the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Christians

*Bishop Demetrios Charbak*

*Introduction*

Since the existence of humankind, dialogue has acquired a special importance: it slowly became the best way of speaking among peoples, to approximate points of view in case of disagreements and, primarily, *to listen to each other*.

Inasmuch as disagreement has entered the body of the Church and divided it into several families of churches, there is, certainly, a need for dialogue amongst the members of those churches in an attempt to go back to the one united Church of the beginning of Christianity, as Christ prayed to His Father "that all may be one" (*John* 17:21).

One of the dialogues among churches which has made not only clear but astonishing progress lately is the dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, the first Co-President of this Official Dialogue representing the Eastern Orthodox, affirms that: "all the above mentioned local Orthodox and Oriental churches welcomed with enthusiasm not only the positive results of the Theological Dialogue but also the prospect for restoration of ecclesiastical communion after a separation of fifteen centuries; they described the complete agreement on Christological doctrine as a historical event".[1] This dialogue started after more than fifteen centuries since the separation which occurred at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

In 1964 unofficial dialogue commenced between the two parties; in 1985 official dialogue began; the results were dazzling for all. At the Monastery of Anba Bishoy in Egypt (20-24 June 1989)[2] the representatives of the two parties agreed on signing a mutual Christological Agreement in which they expressed their mutual faith concerning the Person of Jesus Christ being fully God and fully Man, without commingling (or confusion), without change, without separation and without division.[3] This agreement gave great hope for renewed unity shared by many clergy and laymen/faithful. In fact, this rapprochement seemed to make unity at two bows' length. Some demanded acceleration of the dialogue, to take bold steps and to activate the Agreed Statements which the collective Joint Committee of the dialogue had reached, while others wanted to proceed more slowly.

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[1] *Episkepsis* 516 (1995): 11.

[2] *Episkepsis* 422 (1989): 5; *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. C. Chaillot (Geneva, 1998), 59.

[3] These four adverbs used at the Council of Chalcedon are also used by the Oriental Orthodox Churches in their liturgical and other texts.

Since this dialogue has great importance for our Churches living in the Middle East, it was decided that, in the context of the two Patriarchates of Antioch both having their seat in Damascus (the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate), advanced collective steps should be taken at the pastoral and liturgical levels on the basis of the official Agreements in Christology and in order to build practical bridges between the two families of Churches, in preparation for complete unity. The Statement was made in Damascus on 12 November 1991, pertaining to the Holy Synod's decision of the Greek Orthodox Church which "saw the need to give a concrete expression of the close fellowship between the two Churches (...) for the edification of their faithful".[4]

*Some Steps of the Dialogue*

After the consensus with the two Christological Agreements, the basic obstacles which remained without any clear solution for restoring ecclesiastic unity and partnership between the two churches were the following[5]:

1. The reciprocal lifting of anathemas.
2. The acceptance of the dogmatic decisions issued from the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils.

These issues were the reason for holding the next official meetings of the Joint Theological Committee in Chambésy (Geneva) 23-28 September 1990 and 1-6 November 1993.

At that time some expressions were also discussed which engendered different reactions; and some issues which remained unsettled, for example the two expressions: "one united divine-human nature in Christ" (cf. the First Common Statement in 1989) and "in thought alone" (*te theoria mone*) (cf. the Second Common Statement, 1990).

Special sub-committees have been set up to discuss these questions and others (such as pastoral and liturgical matters) in scientific studies in order to give proper answers.

I suggest reorganising committees in order to discuss fully and in detail all sentences and expressions which raised criticism and negative reactions in these two first Common Statements (1989 and 1990). The task of these committees will be to study and answer clearly and openly all the criticisms made by some.

*Other Issues Remain to Be Discussed*

In the third (23-28 September 1990) and fourth (1-6 November 1993) meetings of the Joint Committee both parties confirmed their desire to eliminate the last obstacles in order to bringing back complete unity and total partnership: (1) to

[4] See the full text in English in *Towards Unity*, 40-41 and see text in this volume. And for French see *Courrier Oecuménique du Moyen-Orient* 16 (1992): 6; and *Service Orthodoxe de Presse*, 163 (1991): 16-18.

[5] Damaskinos of Switzerland, "Ἀπάντηση στὸ Ὑπόμνημα τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους," *Episkepsis* 521 (1995): 8. Also in *Synaxis* 57 (1996): 69 (in Greek).

accept all the Ecumenical Councils—not recognised by the Oriental Orthodox—(Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh) and (2) to lift the reciprocal anathemas.[6] Some Eastern Orthodox insist that, in order to have full unity, the Oriental Orthodox must recognise all the Ecumenical councils recognised by the Eastern Orthodox. Here the rightful question to be put is: is it possible or not to lift the anathemas that are imposed by the Ecumenical Councils? As Professor John Romanides notes: "One must emphasise that acceptance of the three or Seven Ecumenical Councils does not in itself entail agreement in faith. The Franco-Latin Papacy accepts these Councils, but in reality accepts not even one of them. In like manner, there are Orthodox, since Peter the Great, who in reality do not accept the soteriological and the Old Testament presuppositions of these Councils. On the other hand those of the Oriental Orthodox, who have not been Franco-Latinised in important parts of their theology, do accept the first three of the Ecumenical Councils, but in reality accept all Seven, a fact which has now become clear in recent agreement".[7]

Regarding these reciprocal exclusions (anathemas) and their lifting, a question was discussed in the Joint Statements, during the meetings of Chambésy in 1990 and 1993, and it was announced that they can be lifted "on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathemised or condemned are not heretical",[8] that is if the Fathers and theologians in both families of churches are proved not to be heretical.

In the two Christological Agreements between the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches (1989 and 1990), the heterodoxies of Nestorius and Eutyches were condemned.

It is beneficial to say here that many of the modern studies (theological and otherwise) have proved that the two main Church Fathers condemned are not heretical. Dioscorus of Alexandria was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council not because of doctrinal reasons but rather for canonical ones.[9] As he was summoned three times to the Council but did not attend, then the council anathematised him.[10] This is what Patriarch Anatolius of Constantinople

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[6] G. Martzelos, "Ὀρθοδοξία καὶ αἵρεση τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων κατὰ τὸν Ἅγ. Ἰωάννη τὸν Δαμασκηνό," *Theologia* 75 (2004): 609 (in Greek). See Nikolaos Mitsopoulos, "Πρὸς 'πλήρη κοινωνίαν' μετὰ τῶν Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων," *Ekklisia* 72 (1995): 30 (in Greek). Bishoy, Metropolitan of Damiette, "Interpretation of the Christological Official Agreements between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches," unpublished speech delivered at Chambésy Meeting in 1993, 3. T. Malaty, "More Pastoral Efforts for the Achievement of a Future Success in the Course of Unity between the two Orthodox Families," unpublished speech delivered at Chambésy Meeting in 1993, 5.

[7] J. Romanides, "Leo of Rome's support of Theodoret, Dioscorus of Alexandria's support of Eutyches and the lifting of the anathemas," *Theologia* 65/3 (1994): 489-490.

[8] *Towards Unity*, 64.

[9] J. Karmiris, "Minutes of the Geneva Consultation," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR], 16/1-2 (1971): 43. G. Martzelos, "Ἡ ἄρση τῶν ἀναθεμάτων ποιῶν συνόδων καὶ ποιῶν προσώπων εἶναι δυνατὴ σύμφωνα μὲ τὴν πρόταση τῆς παρ. 10 τῆς Β΄ Κοινῆς Δηλώσεως," unpublished speech, delivered at Chambésy Meeting in 1993 (in Greek).

[10] "On October 13 (451) the bishops returned to the case of Dioscorus. He did not, this day, come to the council. Though three times formally summoned he kept away. He was judged contumaciously, and the council asked Paschasinus to pronounce the sentence," Ph. Hughes, *The Church in Crisis: A History of the General Councils* (New York, Hanover House, 1961), available also at http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/coun5.html (last accessed, June 21, 2016). See *Nicene and*

confirmed during the Council of Chalcedon: "Dioscorus was not condemned because of his faith, but because he terminated the partnership with Leo the Bishop of Rome, and because he was summoned three times to the council but did not attend; for that he was anathematized". [11] And: "Dioscorus was considered quite Orthodox in his faith by such leading Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon as those represented by Anatolius of Constantinople". [12]

Although the subject of our research here is not to look for the reasons concerning why Dioscorus did not come before the Council, it could be said that there were, however, several reasons for this. The most important one was the disturbed relations among the patriarchates of the East and their power, especially after the councils of 448 and 449: "Alexandria had of old been the first see of the East and was now only surpassed in power by the imperial city (Constantinople). The Egyptian patriarch Dioscorus had vast civil and political influence, as well as an almost autocratic sway over a hundred bishops and a great army of monks, who were heart and soul devoted to the memory of Cyril and rather fervent than discriminating in their orthodoxy". [13] Egyptian national feeling had also to be taken into consideration: "Native Egypt was united behind the Patriarch of Alexandria. National feelings were involved. Thus the national church of Egypt began". [14] Economic exploitation as well as attempts at conversion played a role: "Deadly hatred against everything Greek filled the Copts because of economic exploitation by Byzantium and the Chalcedonians' attempts at conversion". [15]

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*Post Nicene Father of the Christian Church*, ed. by Ph. Schaff and H. Wace, "The Condemnation Sent by the Holy and Ecumenical Synod to Dioscorus," Volume XIV-*The Seven Ecumenical Councils* (New York 2007), 260. See. J. Romanides, "Leo of Rome's support of Theodoret, Dioscorus of Alexandria's support of Eutyches and the lifting of the anathemas," *Theologia* 65/3 (1994): 485.

[11] "I vote on the deposition of Dioscorus, formerly bishop of the great city of the Alexandrians, having shown himself a stranger to every priestly function because he completely disobeyed the canons of the holy Fathers and having been summoned three times, he did not accept to appear," P. L'Huillier, *The Church of the Ancient Councils*, 189; E. Schwartz, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* (Berolini et Lipsiae, 1914) [ACO], II,1,2,8[204]-29[225]. J. Chapman asserts the same saying that "they had deposed Dioscorus, not indeed for heresy (as Anatolius of Constantinople had the courage, or the impudence, to point out), but for violation of the canons", in J. Chapman, "Eutychianism," http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05633a.htm (last accessed, June 21, 2016). Adolf von Harnack has also the same opinion: "Dioscorus was deposed after a most shameful process, not as a heretic, but on account of his disobedience and irregularities", see Adolf Harnack, *Outlines of the History of Dogma*, trans. by Edwin Knox Mitchell (London: Starr King Press, 1957), 292.

[12] "See Discussion concerning the Paper of Professor Karmiris," GOTR 10/2 (1964-1965): 77. See also *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology*, ed. P. Gregorios, W. Lazareth and N. Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), 45. See also Alois Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Vol. 2 trans. O. C. Dean Jr. (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1996), Part 4, 30.

[13] J. Chapman, "Dioscorus," available at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05019a.htm (last accessed June, 21, 2016). Philip Hughes confirms that the positions of Alexandria and that of Dioscorus were "powerful because it had the full support of the state, and dominated all the churches of the East," Cf. Hughes, *The Church in Crisis*.

[14] William Worrell in Aziz Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1968), 58.

[15] Christoph Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, *from the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon*, Vol. 2, trans. Pauline Allen and John Cawte (London: Mowbray, 1965), 82,

It was also debated "whether the opposition to Chalcedon was out of a Christological issue or an attempt to assert Coptic and Syrian identity against the Byzantine".[16]

According to Elias Tsonievsky, this separation was also based on misunderstandings, national and social conflicts, intolerance, and jurisdictional arrogance.[17]

It is more specifically the different uses of terms by the conflicting parties that made Dioscorus and his followers think that the Council of Chalcedon had deviated from the rightful teachings, especially the teachings of St. Cyril of Alexandria, their model Father and theologian.

As for Severus, he rejected the Council of Chalcedon not because the Council spoke about the two natures, still keeping balance by saying that Christ is One Person, but because it did not follow St. Cyril's doctrine: "Nobody accused it in such a senseless way, we also recognize two natures in Christ—created and a not created one. The Chalcedonian Council had to be anathematised for the fact that it did not follow St. Cyril's doctrine, that it did not say: Christ ἐκ δύο φύσεων that one Christ is of two natures; it rejected the expressions: μία φύσις τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη (one incarnate nature of God the Word), ἕνωσις καθ' ὑπόστασιν, σύνοδος φυσικῆς".[18]

And: "Severus rejected the Council of Chalcedon not because the Council taught about two natures, meditating about the unity of Godhead and manhood in Christ, but because the Fathers of the Council did not follow St. Cyril's doctrine and did not use the terminology of this great master of the Alexandrian school".[19]

At the meeting of the Unofficial Dialogue in Bristol in 1967, Elias Tsonievsky said that "the basis of their separation is the fact that in the formulation of certain fundamental truths of faith in the ancient Christology period, terms were used which did not correspond to the meaning presupposed by subsequent precise definitions".[20]

Concerning Severus, several serious recent studies emphasised that the teaching of Severus is Orthodox. For example, Professor Trembelas brought up as an example the opinion of a committee of the Theological School of the University of Athens to confirm that the teaching of Severus is Orthodox. "The Theological School's committee of three members reviewed in the Introduction of its Report the work of a candidate, Andreas Theodorou, on 'The Christological

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[16] M. Wahba, "The Chalcedon Crisis and Monophysitism: Monophysitism Reconsidered", http://www.coptic.net/articles/monophysitismreconsidered.txt and http://www.coptic.net/articles/Monophysitism (last accessed July, 2016). See also Alexander Schmemann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977), 140.

[17] E. Tsonievsky, "The union of the two natures in Christ according to the non-Chalcedonian Churches and Orthodoxy," GOTR 13/2 (1968): 170.

[18] V. V. Bolotov, *Lectures on the History of the Primitive Church*. Vol. III. History of Theological Thought (Petrograd, 1918), 337 (in Russian).

[19] N. A. Zabolotsky, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος 58 (1976): 358.

[20] "The union if the two natures in Christ According to the non-Chalcedonian Churches and Orthodoxy," GOTR 13/2 (1968): 170.

terminology and teaching of Severus of Antioch', they wrote: "The author comes to the conclusion which seems right to us and to most authorities, that the opinions of Severus are basically Orthodox (...) The teaching of Severus is none other than a systematic "burial" (sic: systematic appraisal) of the teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria, and it does not depart from the teaching of Leontius of Byzantium".[21]

Severus and his followers condemned the monophysitism of Eutyches[22] and accepted the existence of two natures in Jesus Christ even after the union[23] on condition that there must be a distinction between them only in "thought" or "theoretically", that being exactly what the Fifth Ecumenical Council accepted in 553.

If recent studies confirm that Dioscorus' and Severus' teachings are Orthodox, then we definitely must ask ourselves why they were condemned. They were condemned because they refused the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon and its decisions and they broke away from the Church. That is why St. John of Damascus calls them "separatists", but emphasising their Orthodoxy in all other issues, which means that he does not consider them heretics according to the Orthodox Christological doctrines.[24]

We repeat that this refusal of the Fourth Ecumenical Council by the Oriental Orthodox did not happen, as some think, because the Council had discussed and accepted the presence of two natures in Jesus Christ but, according to their opinion, it happened because the Council renounced the teachings, the expressions and terms of St. Cyril's and adopted terms that are strange to the teachings of the Fathers[25] and the Tradition of the Church, thus going back somehow to Nestorianism.

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[21] Panayotis Trembelas, "Some observation on the Aarhus Consultation," GOTR 13/2 (1968): 145.

[22] Professor V. V. Bolotov confirms this idea: "Severus looked at the doctrine of the Chalcedonian Council in a milder way than other monophysites, than, for example, Dioscorus. The latter considered the doctrine about "δύο φύσεις (two natures), ἐν δύο φύσεσιν (in two natures)" as a mere error, a heresy, condemned by the fathers, while Severus sees here only incompleteness, one-sidedness, clumsy choice of dogmatic words which are less successful, instead of the most characteristic ones", See Bolotov, *Lectures on the History of the Primitive Church*, III, 337.

[23] Elias Tsonievsky said that the teaching of Severus is the same with the teaching of Leon of Rome: "A comparison of the teachings of Severus and St. Leo reveals complete unity of thought and doctrine, but in difference in language," in "The union of the two natures in Christ According to the non-Chalcedonian Churches and Orthodoxy," GOTR, 13/2 (1968): 176. Professor Romanides maintains the same idea concerning the teaching of Dioscorus and Leo: "Both Leo and Dioscorus are Orthodox because they agree with St. Cyril of Alexandria," see Romanides, "Leo of Rome's support of Theodoret," *Theologia* 65/3 (1994): 479, available also at http://www.romanity.org/htm/rom.06.en.orthodox_and_oriental_orthodox_consultation.htm (accessed June, 21, 2016). As for Dioscorus, he "was considered quite Orthodox in his faith by such leading Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon as those represented by Anatolius of Constantinople", "Discussion: concerning the Paper of Professor Karmiris", GOTR 10/2 (1964-1965): 77. See, *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?* eds. P. Gregorios, W. Lazareth and N. Nissiotis, 45. See also, A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, Vol. 2, 4, 30.

[24] "They affirmed that the natures were real and perfect, that in the one Christ there were both divine and human properties and faculties irreducibly which we can distinguish in our minds". See V. C. Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined* (Kent: Oriental Orthodox Library, 2005), 279. See also in this volume the article on this topic by Georgios Martzelos.

[25] "The ecclesiastical tradition which refused to accept the council of Chalcedon adopted this step, not because it did not take the manhood of Christ seriously, but because it found in the Tome of Leo and

Father John Romanides explains the misunderstanding of the non-Chalcedonians regarding the definition of the Council of Chalcedon saying that: "The non-Chalcedonian Orthodox reject the Council of Chalcedon and accuse it of Nestorianism because it accepted the *Tome* of Leo, two natures after the union, and allegedly omitted from its definition of faith such Cyrillian expressions as One Nature of God the Logos Incarnate, hypostatic or natural union, and from two natures or from two One Christ. The failure of Chalcedon to make full use of Cyril's Twelve Chapters, to condemn the Christology of Theodore, and its acceptance of Theodoret and Ibas throws suspicion on it".[26]

The most important reason is that even the *Tome* of Leo, which the non–Chalcedonians consider the basis of the Chalcedon Faith Confession, was checked based on the writings, teachings and epistles of St. Cyril and was not accepted until the Fathers approved that it did correspond with what was mentioned in the writings of St. Cyril.[27]

From the minutes of the Council it appears that the Fathers, after reading the *Tome*, exclaimed: "Leo taught piously and truly. Cyril taught accordingly. Eternal is the memory of Cyril. Leo and Cyril taught the same. Leo and Cyril taught accordingly".[28]

We must confirm that the purpose of the Council of Chalcedon was to maintain the Church's faithfulness and unity, not its rupture. Today our duty is to explain the problems of the past and reconsider that this Council could be one of unity, not of separation.[29]

We should not forget that in historical Christology, on one side the party of Alexandria was stressing the unity of the Person of Jesus Christ, and on the other side the party of Antioch was stressing the differentiation between the two natures in order to maintain their wholeness. We completely understand the importance of the two positions, that each one completes the other and that they

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in the council's definition with the 'in two natures' a theological position which they could not honestly accept against the background of their doctrinal tradition", see V. C. Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined*, 300.

[26] J. Romanides, "St. Cyril's 'One Physis or Hypostasis of God the Logos Incarnate' and Chalcedon," GOTR 10/2 (1964-1965): 82. See also Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, "Ἀπάντηση στὸ Ὑπόμνημα τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους," *Episkepsis* 521 (1995): 16; and *Synaxis* 57 (1996): 77 (in Greek). "They (the non-Chalcedonians) believed that Nestorianism was thereby renewed; or at least they thought the definition less satisfactory than St. Cyril's concept of the union of the two natures in Christ. In Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Egypt, and other countries, many monks and ecclesiastics refused to accept the definition of Chalcedon," see F. Schaefer, "Council of Chalcedon", http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03555a.htm (last accessed June, 21, 2016). See Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined*, 300: "Chalcedon was a rehabilitation of Nestorius! Under this slogan the monastic movement against the council, pulling with it the mass of believers, immediately assumed threatening proportions". See also Schmemann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, 138.

[27] *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, Vol. II trans. R. Price and M. Gaddis (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 24-25. The same Professor (see *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* Vol. I, 65) confirms that "The fathers of Chalcedon were profuse in their professions of loyalty to Cyril. Even when judging the Tome of Pope Leo their criterion of orthodoxy remained in agreement with Cyril; this is clear throughout the lengthy discussion of the Tome in the fourth session".

[28] *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, Vol. II, 24-25.

[29] This is exactly what the Synod of Chalcedon was trying to express. *Mansi* VII, 116; ACO II,1,2, 129[325].

together give a clearer image of Jesus Christ, fully God and fully Man, without separation or mixture.

By signing the two joint Christological Agreements and with the suggestions of the committee to lift the anathemas (in 1993) between the two parties, we can consider that the discussions on the doctrinal file are closed.

Other issues are related to pastoral and liturgical matters, which are easier to settle.

As for the liturgical and pastoral problems, questions which were not neglected by the joint sub-committees, two first meetings took place to discuss them. The first meeting was in the Monastery of The Virgin Mary's Repose in Pendeli (15-19 March 1995), Athens;[30] and the second meeting was in Damascus (2-5 February 1998).[31]

The two sub-committees presented suggestions to solve these problems which were considered as minor.

The most important liturgical problems to be solved are the following ones: (1) in the *Trisagion* in the expression "crucified for us"; (2) the use of unleavened bread and (3) not mixing the wine with water in the chalice during the Liturgy.

As for the matter of the addition of the expression "who was crucified for us" by the non-Chalcedonians to the *Trisagion* ("Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us"), in our opinion, it does not create any problem as long as the non-Chalcedonians confess that they understand this addition in a Christological way and not in a triadic (the Holy Trinity) way; and also not because Peter the Fuller added this term in order to confront Nestorianism.[32]

For this we suggest, in the case of holding joint prayers between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, that this term should either be omitted or put immediately after (Holy Strong) so that in this way it appears clearly that it belongs to the second Person of the Trinity (that is Christ), and not to the Trinity itself, so that it becomes a Christological addition in a triad hymn. This solution does not threaten the Orthodoxy of the hymn, as long as the addition, when Christological, is considered Orthodox because of the exchanging of properties between the two natures of Jesus Christ in the one incarnated Person.

As is known, most of those issues mentioned above (unleavened bread, not mixing the wine with water in the chalice during the mass) are followed by the Armenian Church. We know that at the Council of Constantinople, which

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[30] *Episkepsis* 516 (1995): 20.

[31] *Episkepsis* 555 (1998): 15.

[32] V. C. Samuel, "Further studies in the Christology of Severus of Antioch," *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος* 58/3-4 (1976): 275. Samuel explains that this hymn started in Antioch during the fourth century to confront the heresy of Arius and this means that the hymn is Triadic, see Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined* (2005), 127. This explanation comes in opposition to the opinion and teaching of Severus, as Samuel presented in his article about the Christology of Severus, in which Severus confirms that this hymn from the beginning was Christological: «Severus insists that the hymn as a whole was meant from the beginning as a praise addressed to God the Son, so that the addition was indeed very legitimate (...) The hymn is thus Christological and its affirmation is the incarnation of God the Son." See Samuel, "Further studies in the Christology of Severus of Antioch," 293.

was held during the time of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos in 1177, a letter was directed to the Armenians in which there was a reference to that different liturgical custom not forming an obstacle in front of unity.[33]

All these liturgical acts are not of the essence of faith and that is why they do not form an obstacle in front of unity. This is why the Joint Committee responsible for liturgical matters emphasized the necessity of studying these customs and even trying to bring back the liturgical origins which were known at the beginning of the Church.

This is why Metropolitan Damaskinos, then co-president of the Official Theological Dialogue, did not hesitate to affirm in the meeting which was held in Damascus (2-5 February 1998) that the Oriental Churches "preserved those liturgical customs which were prevalent in the first centuries and were not much influenced by the historical theological disagreements about the Christological issues".[34]

The same opinion was expressed by Professor Foundoulis, an expert of liturgy who said: "We had to thank the churches which were existing before Chalcedon because they, with great enthusiasm and with noticeable accuracy, maintained and preserved the liturgical richness which was known in the apostolic catholic Church".[35]

As for the issues which are related to church management and the future relations between the two families of churches when there will be unity, they are delicate issues. For example, we know that in many churches liturgical language is considered as part of each Church's history and culture; thus preserving language means preserving the history and identity of each Church. Because of this, it is necessary that these churches continue to have their clergy using their proper language during their liturgies, in respect of their history. This means that, after unity, each Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Church will continue to celebrate the liturgy and pray in its historic language.

As for the problem concerning the list of diptychs, it was discussed by Metropolitan Georges Khodr, the Archbishop of Mount Lebanon and a member of the Dialogue for many years, who suggested as a solution to follow the ancient metropolitan order, according to the 34th apostolic canon:[36] "Sur le territoire d'un diocèse, on pourrait rétablir le système métropolitain ancien avec des évêques territoriaux qui seraient les pasteurs des minorités rituelles".[37]

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[33] John Karmiris, "Αἱ Ἀρχαῖαι Ἀντιχαλκηδόνειοι Ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀνατολῆς καὶ ἡ βάσις τῆς ἐπανενώσεως αὐτῶν μετὰ τῆς Ὀρθόδοξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας," *Theologia* 36/2 (1965): 164. See also in this volume the article by Catholicos Aram.

[34] *Episkepsis* 555 (1998), 16.

[35] *Episkepsis* 582 (2000), 18.

[36] "The bishops of each province (*ethnos*) must recognize the one who is first (*protos*) amongst them, and consider him to be their head (*kephale*), and not do anything important without his accord (*gnome*); each bishop may only do what concerns his own diocese (*paroikia*) and its dependent territories. But the first (*protos*) cannot do anything without the accord of all. For in this way concord (*homonoia*) will prevail," Apostolic Canons in the 1911 *Encyclopædia Britannica*. See also in Charles Herbermann, "Apostolic Canons," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (Robert Appleton Company, 1913), 35.

[37] Métropolite Georges Khodr, "La manière de comprendre et d'appliquer le rétablissement de la communion ecclésiale dans la vie de notre Eglise," Commission mixte du dialogue théologique entre

However, Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland indicated that the issue of management regulations could be fulfilled particularly within a metropolitan or a patriarchal system according to Canon 39 of the Council in Trullo and to Canons 92-94 of the Synod in Carthage.[38]

As for the file of pastoral questions, it was suggested that each Church can manage these matters according to its history and tradition as is happening now in each Eastern and Oriental Church. Even Churches in communion amongst themselves do not have the same pastoral management. Nor do all the Oriental Churches or all the Eastern Churches have the same pastoral questions among them.

As for the problem of diptychs, the sub-committee of liturgical issues suggested that liturgical books should be cleared of harsh and offensive words; and in the case of order it should be raised in a general way without specific names: "Church Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, bishops and every believer's soul who died in faith".[39]

The sub-committee emphasised also the necessity of correct preparation through publishing books and studies which help in increasing acquaintance among churches, clergy and the faithful.[40] We think that the issue of education and information about the dialogue should start from priests and students of theology as they are the people responsible for the education of the faithful. Therefore we suggest that courses about the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian theological dialogue should be taught in the faculties of theology of both families of churches. Such courses should include doctrinal subjects (especially Christology) as well as explanations about this specific bilateral ecumenical movement. At the same time the results of the Dialogue should be activated at the pastoral level in the parish life of the two churches. In this context it is possible to organise some programs for the clerics and the faithful such as lectures, meetings, seminars and camps. Such activities, if organised in common with the clergy and the faithful of the other family of Churches, would help in better understanding those who are others. It would also stimulate growth in mutual acquaintances and an increased sense of togetherness.

These issues have been activated successfully between the Greek Orthodox and the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchates of Antioch through the important pastoral agreement of 1991 which produced a noticeable effect in the two families of churches. This agreement presented decisions which were taken, in fourteen points, emphasizing that each church should respect the other church and that there is a necessity for closeness between the two families of churches, for positive results of practical dialogue between them. For example, an

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l'Eglise orthodoxe et les Eglises orthodoxes orientales, Chambésy Novembre 1993. See the English translation of this text in the present volume.

[38] Andreas Papavasileiou, *Ὁ θεολογικός διάλογος μεταξὺ Ὀρθοδόξων καὶ Ἀντιχαλκηδονίων* (*The Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and non-Chalcedonians)*, Vol. 1 (Nicosia: Studies Centre of the Holy Monastery Kykkou, 2000), 163-164.

[39] *Episkepsis* 516 (1995): 21.

[40] This was also the suggestion of the Joint Committee of pastoral issues; see *Episkepsis* 555 (1998): 18.

agreement was reached that one of the two churches should pastor the faithful of the other church in the areas where there is no clergy to pastor them. Another point underlines that some sacraments such as baptism and marriage should be kept in special records which are handed over to their native mother Church after the accomplishment of the sacrament.

These agreements facilitated believers' Church affairs and relations to a great extent. In many cases, they brought the clergy and the faithful closer to one another and made them believe that the two families of churches are sincere in their efforts to accomplish the wish of Jesus Christ "to be one".

Starting from this successful agreement, there were voices calling for the possibility of unity at the local level, in order to start an active unity between the two families of churches, to be given as an example and as a first step towards the final and complete unity of all the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Finally, if we take into consideration the fact that division partly started from Antioch, then unity can also start from there. Father John Meyendorff emphasizes that in the history of the Church there are such examples of Church regional unity.[41] Also Metropolitan Philip Saliba, former Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America, emphasises the importance of establishing such a gradual unity, while accepting the presence of some obstacles which are not yet solved; and he wishes to find the right solutions for them after the unity.[42]

*Conclusion*

As for our late Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius IV Hazim (d. 2012), often called the "Father of Dialogue", he used to concentrate on relations with the Oriental Orthodox Churches and particularly the Syrian Orthodox Church due to its important presence in Syria and Lebanon, and also because of the presence of their Patriarch in Damascus. This situation has allowed continuous meetings and permanent coordination between the two Churches. Patriarch Ignatius described those Churches as Sister Churches in the full sense of this word: "The Oriental Orthodox Church is a sister Church, a sister in the deepest sense of this word". More than once he strongly asserted that especially the Oriental Orthodox Church and his Church were one family and had the same belief.[43]

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[41] Theodore Pulcini affirms that Father John Meyendorff.supports the regional unity in "The history of the Church has also known precedents for initiatives taken regionally", Th. Pulcini, "Practical steps toward unity," https://orthodoxjointcommission.wordpress.com/2013/12/14/eastern-orthodox-oriental-orthodox-relations-practical-steps-toward-unity (last accessed, August, 2016).

[42] Metropolitan Philip Saliba said that the practical obstacles, even if they are not essential, are important. In his opinion, even if they should not prevent the unity between the two families of Churches, the Churches themselves should try to find solutions for them: "None of these (problems) are 'monumental' enough to preclude reunion», Th. Pulcini, "Practical steps toward unity," https://orthodoxjointcommission.wordpress.com/2013/12/14/eastern-orthodox-oriental-orthodox-relations-practical-steps-toward-unity (last accessed, August, 2016)

[43] Bishop D. Charbak, "Patriarch Ignace IV of Antioch," in *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism: Resources for Theological Education*, eds. P. Kalaitzidis et al. (Volos, Greece: Volos Academy Publications in cooperation with WCC Publications and Regnum Books International, 2014), 303.

As for the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan Gregorius Yohanna Ibrahim, another member of the Official Theological Dialogue, he summarised my main ideas presented in this article when he wrote: "Concerning the Theological Dialogue between the Oriental Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox Churches (...) the theological discussions revealed that the separation was due to a terminological misunderstanding in the use of the word *physis*, which could be understood as 'nature' or 'Person'. For both Eastern and Oriental Orthodox families, Christ is fully God and fully Man, in one Person, without confusion, without change, without separation and without division. In consequence the two Orthodox families signed an Agreement concerning the recognition of their common Christological faith in St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, in June 1989 (...) Now the anathemas between the two families still have to be removed. Then the question of how and when full communion between the two families can be re-established must be discussed. To concelebrate the Eucharist together would mean that all the differences, theological and other, would no longer be considered as such. As for the bi-lateral dialogue between the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox of Antioch, it took a particular turn when the Synod of the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and of the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch, both based in Damascus, signed an Agreement in 1991 concerning a common approach to certain pastoral matters. These documents emphasize that each family must keep its own liturgical and other traditions. In the Middle East this Agreement seems to have been put into practice. These two families of Churches have the same Syriac roots, even if today they both speak Arabic in daily life and often in prayer life, at least in Arabic speaking countries (...) Working for unity does not imply that we neglect our Syriac language, history and heritage. On the contrary, we lay stress on that, through the theological dialogue, we are not going to be intermingled or changed. Everyone will maintain his own Tradition. We shall have to recognise a pluralism in liturgical and other expressions. At the same time, we shall do our best to have the maximum cooperation with the others (...) The mistakes of past history should not be repeated. I believe that the two Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Families were one in the past. If today all the factors of division disappeared, both Families should return to their sources. If Christology, theology, ecclesiology were sometimes misunderstood in the past, today they are no longer obstacles on the way to reunion".[44]

Let us hope that all our prelates, clergy and the faithful of our two families of churches may understand this and do their best in activating a full unity.

[44] Preface to the book by Christine Chaillot, *The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East* (Geneva, 1998), 8-11. For the abduction of Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim and Archbishop Paul Yazigi from Aleppo see http://www.antiochian.org/christian-churches-together-urges-president-support-abducted-syrian-bishops (last accessed, June, 2016).

# Suggestions for Determining the Basic Cornerstones Leading to Ecclesial Unity*

*Metropolitan Georges Khodr of Mount Lebanon*

Allow me at the outset, before I attempt to deal with the issue of a common understanding of our imminently restored unity, to draw your attention to the fact that the deliberations of our Joint Commission have not gone beyond the discussions that took place during the first millennium of our era. Nevertheless, a store of unquenchable wealth has been laid down for our consideration in the workings of the Palamite Councils[45] that dealt with the basic foundations of the dogmas that touch upon our spiritual and sacramental life, a heritage that would, if carefully scrutinized, clarify a number of misunderstandings that face us touching on the nature of Divine Grace. I say this for it seems to me that our understanding of the whole task of salvation should be discussed in the light of the assurance of the deification of man as handed down to us by the tradition stemming from Saint Irenaeus up to Saint Gregory of Thessalonica. Should we ignore these teachings, then whatever we may say about salvation would be but mere words that have absolutely no bearing on man's salvation. Is man not reduced to naught if he is not raised to glory through the salvific action of Divine Grace?

It seems to me that if we delve into this golden theme of the Palamite Councils our common search would become that much richer. For is it possible for us to get to the deep meaning of the sacraments that we celebrate without our considering them as the very place of our deification?

Moreover, and following the same line of thinking, the study of the liturgical texts of the Oriental Orthodox Churches is imperative for us if our main concern is to focus on discerning the extent of the conformity of the liturgical developments in these churches over the last fifteen centuries to our main earlier common heritage. Aside from what Porphyrus Uspenski has written in the 19th century on the liturgy of the Coptic Church, I for one do not know if our veteran liturgists have really studied in depth the liturgical languages and practices used by our Oriental brethren. Is there no risk in leaving the task of this kind of necessary investigation to future generations in a hopefully united Church?

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* Written notes by Metropolitan Georges Khodr for the Joint Commission for the Dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Churches (Orthodox Center of Ecumenical Patriarchate, Chambésy, Switzerland, November 1-6, 1993).

[45] The Palamite Synods, or the Hesychast Synods, discussed the theology of Gregory Palamas in the Byzantine capital Constantinople between 1341 and 1351 to deal with a dispute concerning the mystical doctrine of Hesychasm, the process of retiring inward by ceasing to register the senses, in order to achieve an experiential knowledge of God.

With due consideration given to such probing, and in the present common endeavour is deemed sufficient, we can already say with certainty that the Orthodox Church in its entirety has reestablished within itself its formerly broken unity. The beauty of such an anticipated great gathering calls for the convocation of an Ecumenical Council in which the pastors of both of our Church families would celebrate together their rediscovered unity as they mutually proclaim that they uphold the same faith having been set free from all forms of former mutual proscriptions.

This council would be considered, in the inner consciousness of all believers, as a true positive alteration of all hearts as they experience the fact of being healed from a wound that is weighing deeply on our negotiations. The groaning from such a wound is still expressed by a number of doubting agnostics in our midst. Moreover such a council may very well contribute to lightening the burden of history and be witness to the fact that we have come to a deep awareness of our common togetherness revealed to us by the power of the Spirit in the midst of our diversities.

I will dwell more deeply on this a bit later. Let me point out first that should an ecumenical council not be possible for us today as a vehicle of our common declaration of love towards one another as well as a visible sign of our unity, it would be enough at this point in time if every Synod of each of our autocephalous churches, in agreement with sister churches, proclaim that it is henceforth in communion with the old Oriental Churches. This practice is in line with the former mutual canonical acknowledgement of unity between local synods.

At the stage at which we are today the reestablishment of ecclesial communion can be thus proclaimed and lived provided that the old Oriental Churches decide and profess such a unity through their own church polities.

Needless to say, the canonical integration of the two families of churches is far more complex. It would require a reconsideration of the synodical administration in areas in which these two Church families coexist geographically in the same region as well as in the areas of their respective diasporas.

The obvious issue to be dealt with here is that of the territorial dimension of church polity which is a necessary canonical basis for the unity of the Church. Is it conceivable for instance to proclaim one bishop in every metropolis while at the same time making allowance for a multiplicity of rites in the same city? Furthermore, what about the hindrances of setting up one synod in a specific patriarchal territory?

If the unity of the Armenian Church and the Church of Ethiopia for instance does not present any problem because each one of these two churches covers a specific delimited territory as a respective residence geographic area for its body of believers, and if therefore these two churches can thus be considered as autocephalous communities in a united reconciled Orthodox Church, what about the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church that both coexist in the same geographic area as the Orthodox Church?

At parish level a bilateral ritualistic practice does not present any difficulty. Moreover, the old metropolitan system of governance could be reestablished with a number of territorial bishops that would be entrusted with

the pastoral care of minorities belonging to different ritualistic traditions. But would one synod be conceivable in such cases, or even one patriarch in one area in which a diversified population group lives? This would not be theoretically impossible to realize should the various church hierarchs living in the same territorial jurisdiction study the various liturgical practices of the local churches falling in their respective territorial jurisdictions. Our main difficulty however is that we have become in fact separate "nations" (*millets*) or rather distinctive ethnic and linguistic groups living together on the same territory bearing the heavy burden of fifteen centuries of a state of dividedness.

Should we envisage two synods in Alexandria as well as in Antioch? Can we conceive of two prelates both bearing the same patriarchal designation here and there? Perhaps this is inevitable in an imminent reconciliation. But what about the respective Coptic or Syrian Orthodox Diasporas? Would the bishops in the lands of the Diasporas be accountable to their respective synods?

The 34th Apostolic Canon indicates that the bishops should acknowledge a primacy of honor within their realm. Byzantium, as well as the cultural diversity in which we have come to live, have transformed us into separate *millets*. It seems inevitable to me that the various linguistic and national families to which we belong would remain as such for tens of years to come and thereby would coerce us into a sort of abnormal canonical state that would be with us to stay for quite some time to come, according to a system of judicial pluralism.

# Which Orthodoxy, Whose Heresy? An Eastern Orthodox Comment on the Breach between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches

*Nikolaos Asproulis and Pantelis Kalaitzidis*

The last 1500 years and more have witnessed the unpleasant effects of a schism in the midst of Orthodoxy, a result of a controversial Christological debate which took place at the Council of Chalcedon (451),[1] concerning the way divine and human natures are united in Christ. Since that Council and its endeavour to express and further clarify the Orthodox faith in relation to Christological dogma, an unpredictable division manifested between those who claimed to faithfully follow the Council (Eastern Orthodox along with their Western brethren) by adopting its *Horos* and labelling Chalcedon as the Fourth Ecumenical Council, and those who rejected it and never recognized it as an Ecumenical Council (non-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox).[2] For the later it was considered a profound Christological deviation from Orthodoxy as it had been formulated in the first Three Ecumenical Councils (325, 381, 431), as well as from Cyril of Alexandria, their primary theological person of reference. Several attempts aiming at the reconciliation of the two Church families had already been put forth in the policy of the Byzantine Emperors of that time in the East (Zeno, Justinian, etc) especially during the sixth and seventh centuries right up until the Middle East was occupied by the Arabs.[3] In the 20th century some important agreements were achieved at the theological level in the context of both unofficial (1964-1971) and official (1985-1993) dialogues[4] between the two communities, but the schism has not been yet healed. In what follows an attempt will be made to critically reflect on the various conditions that prevent the Eastern Orthodox from full (Eucharistic) communion with the Oriental Orthodox, while considering some possible ways of overcoming what still divides these two Christian families. The real issue at stake here is not the issue between Orthodoxy and heresy, but primarily the one related to the extent that communion is compatible with otherness (between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox) and *vice versa*.

[1] See for instance, John Meyendorff, "Chalcedonians and Monophysites after Chalcedon," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR] 10 (1964): 16-30, and V. C. Samuel, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-examined* (Xlibris Corporation, 2001).

[2] For a general overview of the diverse families in Orthodoxy see *The Orthodox Christian World*, ed. Augustine Casiday (New York: Routledge, 2012).

[3] See for instance, V. C. Samuel, "A Brief History of Efforts to Re-unite the Chalcedonian and Non-Chalcedonian Sides," GOTR 16 (1971): 44-62.

[4] For the texts see, *Towards Unity: The Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. Christine Chaillot (Geneva, 1998).

## *1. Is Eastern Orthodoxy Ready for Self-Criticism?*

The ecclesial division of 451[5] is a reality which still challenges the very character and nature of the Church as the Body of Christ split in various parts. Throughout the centuries, the inherent ecumenical dimension of the Church has been obscured by various cultural, political and historical reasons, rendering the vision of unity a difficult task. Divisions thereby turned out to be the source of estrangement between Churches and Christian people.

In this respect and due to the distance of time since the occurrence of the breach under discussion, one is obliged to ask from an Eastern Orthodox perspective the following critical questions: How could anyone explain the Eastern Orthodox reluctance or, even, animosity, towards the ecumenical idea, and in our context the unity with Oriental Orthodox? Why are some Eastern Orthodox with a rich universalistic tradition facing today a strong and tenacious fundamentalist resistance towards the profound affinity of faith with the Oriental Orthodox? What are the historical, social and other reasons for the strengthening of anti-ecumenical movements and feelings that prevent the Eastern Orthodox from a restoration of faith with their Oriental Orthodox brethren? Despite all the various efforts for theological dialogue mentioned above and despite the agreements reached on a series of "Proposals",[6] great reactions were expressed, for instance by some monasteries in Mount-Athos with great influence on conservative people.[7]

On the contrary, these "Proposals" were not followed by serious and effective impact on the life of the respective Churches as many Patriarchates and Churches did not react at all. Today there is no real progress towards the next step, i.e. the restoration of the full ecclesial and Eucharistic communion. Let us try then to present in brief a critical examination of several factors that prevent Eastern Orthodoxy from proceeding to this final step.

### *1a. Persistent Ambiguity of the Eastern Orthodox Participation in the Ecumenical Movement* [8]

It is evident that despite the institutional participation of nearly all canonical

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[5] For a historical overview of this division, see Vlassios Phidas, *Church History*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1994), 620 ff. (in Greek). See also, Thomas FitzGerald, "Restoring the Unity in Faith: The Orthodox-Oriental Dialogue," in *Restoring the Unity in Faith: The Orthodox-Oriental Dialogue*, eds. Thomas FitzGerald and Emmanuel Gratsias (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007), 5-38.

[6] For the relevant texts see the appendix.

[7] For the various reactions expressed against the dialogue between the two families, see for instance: *Dioscorus and Severus. The Anti-Chalcedonian Heretics. A Critique of two Doctoral theses* (Mount Athos: Holy Monastery of Gregoriou, 2003); *Comments on the Theological Dialogue between Orthodox and Anti-Chalcedonians* (Mount Athos: Holy Community of Mount Athos, 1996); *Are the Anti-Chalcedonian Orthodox?* (Mount Athos: Holy Monastery of Gregoriou, 1995), (in Greek).

[8] The first part of this article (1a-1d) with the necessary adjustments draws mainly on Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "Theological, Historical, and Cultural Reasons for Anti-Ecumenical Movements in Eastern Orthodoxy," in *Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism: Recourses for theological education*, eds. P. Kalaitzidis et al. (Volos, Greece: Volos Academy Publications in cooperation with WCC Publications and Regnum Books International, 2014), 134-152.

autocephalous Eastern Orthodox Churches in the Ecumenical Movement and some of their fruitful and constructive contribution to many crucial issues, as well as the leading role of distinguished Eastern Orthodox theologians in promoting ecumenical understanding and theological reflection towards Christian unity, it seems that from the Eastern Orthodox side, and especially in the monastic milieus (for instance Mount Athos and related monasteries outside Greece), the low clergy (with several exceptions though in relation to University Professors and Hierarchs)[9] and the grassroots, there has always been a long-standing suspicion towards, if not an open rejection of, the Ecumenical Movement. The present extreme reactions of a conservative part of the Eastern Orthodox faithful (with an anti-modern, anti-ecumenical, anti-Western agenda and beyond), against any reformation or change in the Church life, led many local Eastern Orthodox Churches, Hierarchs and lay theologians to the adoption of an ambiguous stance towards the Ecumenical Movement: with some rare exceptions, the general rule was that, while they were fully participating in the ecumenical meetings and discussions, the official ecumenical representatives of the Eastern Orthodox Churches systematically avoided speaking after these meetings to a wider audience within their Churches at home, and informing or educating them about ecumenical matters. The official Orthodox representatives employed for decades a dual language: one ecumenical *ad extra*, and one conservative and defensive (but not principally anti-ecumenical) *ad intra*. As a result of this ambiguity, despite the initial positive attitude of Eastern Orthodoxy towards Ecumenical Movement and inter-Christian dialogue, the Eastern Orthodox people remained alienated from, and finally became even suspicious of, the search for Christian unity and the efforts towards ecumenical understanding, even in such cases as the relations with the Oriental Orthodox where no proper doctrinal disagreement exists.

This reality implies a serious re-consideration of and reflection on a range of reasons and factors as the following ones: the understanding of the Ecumenical Movement as well as any sort of bilateral dialogue (as is the case also with the Oriental Orthodox) mainly or exclusively as the *return* to Eastern Orthodoxy as the only possibility of reconciliation; the exclusivist ecclesiological models and the non-recognition of the "ecclesiological status" of the other Christian Churches and Confessions; historical reasons as Western aggressiveness (at least since the Crusades) and the consequent traumatic historical experience of Orthodox peoples, which decisively contributed to the formation of Orthodox anti-Westernism and also introversion, fundamentalism and anti-ecumenism and the successive losses of Eastern Orthodox universalism and catholicity.

[9] See previous note.

### *1b. The Understanding of Ecumenical Movement as a Return to Orthodoxy and the Exclusivist Orthodox Ecclesiological Models*[10]

If the Ecumenical Movement in general and any bilateral inter-Christian dialogue in particular is "a great move of conversion and repentance" (Jürgen Molltman), is it not the time for the Eastern Orthodox to recognize their own mistakes, failures and weaknesses for which they need to ask forgiveness in the light of an "ecumenism of repentance"?[11] Is it not the time to finally clarify the issues the Eastern Orthodox should reconsider in the light of the common tradition of the undivided Church, without immediate suspicion?

In any case, according to the prevailing idea among many clerics, monastics, and lay Orthodox today, this return should not only include the acceptance by Orientals (as well as by other Christian traditions and Churches) of the Eastern Orthodox position and terminology in key dogmatic issues such as Christology, but should also take into account the liturgical rite, canonical matters and even local customs and practices, in other words a general uniformity in all aspects of Eastern Orthodox ecclesial life and experience.

For years now, there has not been any serious discussion, especially among the Orthodox officials, regarding the nature and the origins of the differences separating us from Christians of other traditions. For example, this refers to an effort of distinguishing and discerning the differences we have with the Oriental Orthodox: which are touching the very core of the ecclesial faith and which are just a reflection or an expression of the cultural, social or political context of each place and time. In other words, one could re-formulate the issue under discussion in terms of the relation between dogmas and the so-called *theologoumena*,[12] that is between theological and non-theological factors, a distinction which would ascribe a great account of freedom to the official theological discussions.

For many of the Eastern Orthodox, every different practice in the life of the other Church families, every diverging wording in the latter's dogmatic tradition immediately acquires the status of doctrinal distortion, a position which must be overcome if we want to have a true ecumenical spirit, towards the union and communion in the same Eucharistic chalice. It is a fact that for many Eastern Orthodox it is difficult to see unity in diversity and to accept otherness as constituting of unity, or to think of reaching Church unity through the

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[10] For the different ecclesiological models in contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology see Cyril Hovorun, "Borders of Salvation: Reading Fathers with Russian Theologians," in *Für Uns und für unser Heil: Soteriologie in Ost und West*, eds. Theresia Hainthaler et al. (Innsbruck: Verlagsanstalt Tyrolia, 2014), 313-322.

[11] Cf. the appeal made by His Beatitude John X, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, during the 24th conference of Orthodox spirituality in Bose on the theme "Martyrdom and Communion," September, 7-10, 2016: "In ecumenism, we are in need of an 'ecumenism of repentance' (*metanoia*) (...) and (...) of an 'ecumenism of blood', through the new Christian martyrs of today (the Coptic and Ethiopian martyrs in Libya, Eastern Orthodox in Syria, etc)," available at http://antiochpatriarchate.org/en/page/john-x-patriarch-of-antioch-and-all-the-east-blood-of-martyrs-seed-of-communion-monastery-of-bose-september-2016/1489/ (last accessed 20 September, 2016).

[12] Cf. V. V. Bolotov "Thesen über das 'Filioque' von einem russischen Theologen," *Internationale theologische Zeitschrift* 6 (1898): 681-712.

legitimate Church's diversities and particularities, despite any positive approach to otherness articulated nowadays by some leading Eastern Orthodox theologians.[13]

Unfortunately, legitimate theological pluralism and unity in diversity may be treated with suspicion when it comes to Christians of other traditions. Many Eastern Orthodox completely ignore the other parts of Christianity, showing a tendency towards their own uniformity and homogeneity, without the acceptance of otherness.

However, in order to understand and explain the above defensive attitude chiefly characterized by an ecclesiological exclusivism and theological uniformity, one has to be aware of the successive losses of Orthodox universalism which determined, to a great extent, the theological background of the Eastern Orthodox anti-ecumenical movements and shaped their physiognomy and agenda.

### *1c. The Successive Losses of Eastern Orthodox Universalism and Catholicity. A Comprehensive and Inclusive Study of Patristic Sources*

In the Final Document of the Third Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference of Chambésy, Geneva (1986),[14] the Eastern Orthodox Church expresses its "profound conviction and ecclesiastical consciousness of being the bearer of and the witness to the faith and tradition of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church". This understanding of the Catholicity of the Church, chiefly and primarily experienced in the Eucharist, and formulated within the theology of the local Church and through a robust Eucharistic ecclesiology, is not without consequences for the historical course of the Church, especially since it was linked, in many regards, to the universalistic vision of a Christian empire, i.e. the Roman/Byzantine empire which was claiming to incarnate and to realize the Kingdom of God on earth, and in which the Emperor was supposed to be "in place of Christ".

However, to the extent that this catholic and universalistic vision was related to the Byzantine theocracy, to the Roman/Byzantine world (*oikoumene*) and the imperial power, it was (and still is) suffering from a series of multiple—mainly historical and political—losses related, in their turn, to the retreat, diminution, and finally demise of the Roman/Byzantine empire, losses which seriously affected the sense of the catholic and universalistic consciousness of Eastern Orthodoxy. The Byzantine Empire's Fall in 1453 appears to have opened an incurable wound in the ecclesiological constitution and the way in which the Eastern Orthodox materialize the relationship between local and universal Church, between the particular and the catholic. In fact, it is difficult to decide if *this* vision of catholicity arises from the fundamental Eucharistic experience and its ensuing ecclesiological principles (being at the heart of the experience of the Eastern Orthodox Church) or from the imperial unity and the

[13] John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: T & T Clark, 2006).

[14] Available at *Orthodox Visions of Ecumenism: Statements, Messages and Reports on the Ecumenical Movement, 1902-1922*, ed. by Gennadios Limouris (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1994), 112.

reality of the Roman/Byzantine *oikoumene*. Even worse, for many Eastern Orthodox these two visions of catholicity and universality are just nothing else but identical! If the catholicity and universality of the Church was really linked with the Empire, then we can easily understand some consequences for the Church history, including the one after the schism of Chalcedon in 451. It is commonly admitted today that the Oriental Christians separated themselves from the imperial Byzantine Church not only for theological, but also for political, cultural and other reasons, i.e. as a reaction to the oppression of ethnic identity and local cultural expression by the imperial power.[15] Further Hellenization was also an unavoidable effect of this Byzantine dominion in the Oriental regions (mainly Syria, Palestine, Egypt), in regions with particular expressions of Christian theology (e.g. Antioch and Alexandria). Chalcedonian Orthodoxy gradually became mainly Greek in its cultural expression and liturgical experience.

In addition to that, the "*lex orandi*", so important for the Chalcedonian Orthodox ecclesiological and theological self-consciousness, came to be identified exclusively with the Byzantine liturgical tradition, and therefore to the belief that only within the frame of this tradition could the authentic experience of holiness and divine-human communion (θέωσις) be acquired. Besides, in recent times, the Chalcedonian Orthodox have hardly known, studied, or accepted patristic traditions other than that of the Greek Fathers, while almost totally ignoring the Syriac, Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopian Church Fathers, also a result of the one-sidedness of the dominant role of the "neopatristic" model of doing theology.[16]

The 20th century was a time of renewal for Eastern Orthodox theology. However, at the same time it was also—precisely because of the way in which this "return to the Fathers" was perceived, especially by some of the so-called "heirs" of Florovsky's legacy—a time of introversion, conservatism and of a static or fundamentalist understanding of the concept of Tradition, which very often came to be equated with traditionalism, a reality quite evident in the way representatives of the monastic milieu or conservative Eastern Orthodox theologians still conceive and interpret today the Christological debates of the 5th century.

It is evident, therefore, that a serious study of the Church Fathers of the other traditions (in our respect, of the different Oriental Orthodox traditions) is badly needed in the context of the official bilateral dialogue. We must study all these little known important patristic sources in depth and with a really

[15] This Oriental resistance to the Byzantine power, to the imperial Church, and to its predominantly Greek culture and expression was often violently rejected by the state authorities, adding to the religious and cultural divide a strong feeling of oppression and defiance. If the Eastern Orthodox were rightly expecting that Roman Catholics should ask forgiveness for all their aggressions and acts of pillage inflicted during the Fourth Crusade and the Frankish conquest of the Greek East, Oriental Orthodox might also in turn legitimately expect a similar gesture on behalf of the Byzantine Orthodox for all the suffering and oppression endured over centuries of Byzantine dominion of the Oriental provinces of the Empire.

[16] We should however notice that Fr. Florovsky abundantly uses in his writings the Latin Fathers. For a comprehensive and critical overview of the neo-patristic trend in contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology see among others P. Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

ecumenical spirit. In this way we can go beyond the various existent misunderstandings so as to correctly interpret and fully receive these patristic sources and their theological truth as belonging to the one common Tradition.

### *1d. The Growing Influence of the Monastic Milieu*

We cannot understand the Eastern Orthodox reactions to the Ecumenical Movement in general and to the bilateral dialogue with the Orientals in particular, without taking into account the decisive role, and growing influence of the monastic milieu on the Chalcedonian Orthodox faithful. Over the past few decades, Eastern Orthodox monasticism has undergone a remarkable spiritual renewal and also significant economic, and in some cases even political empowerment, which first took place at the end of the 1960s on Mount Athos. Later, this renewal spread to the whole Eastern Orthodox world, both in traditional Orthodox countries (such as those in Eastern Europe) and also in the diaspora (for example in North America and even in Africa), and the Church of Antioch (Syria and Lebanon) being the last places where the Athonite spirit was exported.[17] Monastic renewal nowadays too often displays the strengthening of fundamentalism and anti-ecumenism. In addition, Orthodox monasticism is becoming more and more visible by its tendency to patronize the ecclesial body and to engage in a worldly fundamentalist activism. Furthermore, there is a growing tendency among monastic milieus of frequent and open accusations aimed at bishops and lay theologians and even Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs, especially those involved in the ecumenical movement and the bilateral dialogues, charging them with the betrayal of Orthodoxy and theological minimalism or relativism.

One gets the impression that nowadays many of the monastics seek to be considered as the ultimate authority and the genuine voice of Orthodoxy, even though many monks have no serious theological education, but believe and claim that many local Orthodox Churches have been diverted from the proper and authentic Orthodox path. For them, it is clear that even decisions taken at a Pan-Orthodox level[18] or any achieved agreements with the Oriental Orthodox which have taken place at the official theological level[19]—the preparation and final wording of which contributed also at different stages by conservative or

[17] Despite this Athonite expansion and growing influence in Syria and Lebanon, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East signed (in November 1991) and reaffirmed (in February 2013) a limited intercommunion and mutual pastoral solidarity with the Syrian Orthodox Church. Following the Pastoral Agreement between the Coptic Orthodox and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Alexandria (2001), a limited mutual pastoral unity was also extended to the faithful of these two Churches.

[18] For example the 3rd Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Consultation of Chambésy (1986), concerning the participation of the Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement.

[19] For instance according to the 1993 Official meeting of the Joint Eastern Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Commission: "In the light of our four unofficial consultations (1964, 1967, 1970, 1971) and our three official meetings which followed on (1985, 1989, 1990), we have understood that both families have loyally maintained the authentic Orthodox Christological doctrine, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways".

"traditional" Orthodox theologians, like Ioannis Karmiris or Fr. John Romanides—cannot be accepted in practice, if they do not get the prior approval of the ultra-Orthodox movements. These movements continue to exert a kind of spiritual and ecclesial supervision over the Chalcedonian Orthodox throughout the world, a sort of universal jurisdiction over local Churches.

### *2. Hidden Elements of Eastern Orthodox Christian Tradition in the Service of Reconciliation and Unity*

The current unpleasant condition of Eastern Orthodoxy notwithstanding, several hidden or, for ideological reasons, downgraded elements of its theology, experience and Tradition, continue to be an invaluable means towards the healing of the breach between the two Church families. Despite the temporary impasse of the Official dialogue, one could hermeneutically draw on various aspects of the more or less common Tradition of the primitive Church, in order to formulate and further develop the theological vision that would facilitate an honest and frank rapprochement between the two Church families.

#### *2a. Doctrinal Development: Is it Possible?*

In his essay published in 1845[20], the late Cardinal John Henry Newman, based on a detailed account of the early patristic tradition, argued that it was possible for the Church to further re-state its teaching in a more profound and clear way, while remaining faithful to the content of the earlier formulae. In our case, even though various contemporary Eastern Orthodox theologians re-acted against any sort of doctrinal development,[21] this negative attitude did not prevent yet other theologians from re-envisioning this crucial issue.[22] Fr. Dumitru Staniloae, for instance, an outstanding and widely respected Romanian theologian of the 20th century, became a strong advocate of doctrinal development on the part of Eastern Orthodox theology. Following his argument, as it was clearly expressed in one of his articles focusing on the issue at hand,[23] one should be ready to admit that even though the revelation of truth is fully manifested in Christ, human beings, due to their creaturely contingency, no longer find themselves at the same stage of spiritual readiness, capable of receiving or replying to the divine call with the same conceptual tools employed by their precedents. While the content of faith still remains the same, being thereby in spiritual continuity with the early Church to properly define it, namely it does not experience the

[20] The standard edition of Newman's classic work is: John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, Foreword by Ian Ker (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).

[21] See for instance Daniel Lattier, "The Orthodox Rejection of Doctrinal Development," *Pro Ecclesia* 20, 4 (2011): 389-410.

[22] Cf. Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "The issue of Dogmatic Development in Contemporary Orthodox Theology," in *Dogma and Terminology in the Orthodox Tradition Today*, eds. I. Tulcan, P. Bouteneff and M. Stavrou (Sibiu: Astra Museum, 2015), 157-169.

[23] Dumitru Staniloae, "The Orthodox Conception of Tradition and the Development of Doctrine," *Sobornost* 5 (1969): 652-662.

same problems, challenges or reality in our modern world, "hence comes the justification and the necessity for employing new words, metaphors and formulas in order to express the mystery".[24] As Staniloae himself further explains, referring also to the early Church Fathers,

> These new expressions by which certain aspects insufficiently realized before are grasped, these more articulate experiences and more complex effects of the activity of Christ, which are more adequate to the richness which is in Him and to the more profound problematic of a humanity which is spiritually more advanced—all these represent what Vincent of Lerins calls a *progressus in idem* (...) It is the same *motus stabilis* or *status mobilis,* of which St. Gregory of Nyssa speaks, who maintains that only he who makes progress remains steadfast for he remains in the same line, while he who is not constantly progressing falls into dullness, because the meaning of formulas which are not refreshed becomes covered with dust, and obscured by usage.[25]

It is evident, therefore that the employing of new expressions to re-state earlier *formulae* does not account for any deviation from the original meaning or the true content of the right faith, but is related with the always new reality of the surrounding settings that necessitate a move of accommodation on the human side, so as to better grasp, experience and live the Orthodox faith and the mystery of salvation. Since the Church is considered as a living Body, as a "way of being" and "mode of existence" (Metropolitan John D. Zizioulas) and not merely or primarily as a fixed and petrified institution, the necessity of a continuous re-incarnation of the good news of the Gospel[26] and its theological expression in the most adequate and spiritually capable expressive concepts is something that is required by the very nature of the ecclesial faith and tradition itself, rather than by any external sociological, political or cultural factor; this is due to the fact that the Person of Jesus Christ is "for ever the same". In this respect efforts were undertaken by not only eminent Eastern and Oriental Orthodox scholars to provide a more accurate or inclusive term to interpret the famous Cyrilian formula ("One nature of the God the Logos incarnate") in terms of "miaphysite"[27] that accounts for a "*composite* nature" (equivalent to 'person' or '*hypostasis*' in Chalcedon) and not for one simple numerical nature. This allows to go beyond the former Christological polemic. This new wording of "miaphysite" allows to re-state the earlier formula and to understand better the real Christological status of the Oriental Orthodox, without repeating the ambiguous term used until now, namely the "monophysite", which has been rejected by the Oriental Orthodox themselves and considered as wrong in the context of the bilateral dialogue.

At the same time, a positive reception of doctrinal development does not account for any radical departure from the formation of faith by the early Church, especially in terms of content. As Staniloae puts it,

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[24] Staniloae, "The Orthodox Conception of Tradition," 659.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "From the 'Return to the Fathers' to the Need for a Modern Orthodox Theology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 54 (2010): 5-36.

[27] See relative articles in this volume. Additionally the most recent by Sebastian Brock, "Miaphysite, not monophysite!," *Cristianesimo nella storia* 37 (2016): 45-51.

> new words and expressions must not drive out those which were valid at the beginning, but must indeed be constantly verified in the light of them, so that the Church may be sure that the new expressions do not take us away from the mystery of Christ's action, lived at the beginning in its integrity. The new expressions must be incorporated amongst those by which the mystery of Christ was revealed at the beginning, so that the original expressions may recover their freshness, and the meaning of the new ones may convey the same mystery of the action of Christ as did the original ones.[28]

Besides, Staniloae himself has worked out a similar model of doctrinal development in relation to the necessity of reformulating the Cyrilian formula and the *Horos* of Chalcedon.[29] He continuously insisted on the need to re-work the ancient *formulae* of faith in the sense that human language cannot fully and definitely grasp and express the fullness of faith. In this regard he echoes another well-known Eastern Orthodox scholar and historian, the late Fr. John Meyendorff who explicitly states that,

> theological terminology can only partially, and always somehow inaccurately, express the Truth. It is nothing else than a means of communication, an instrument used by the Church to convey its teaching. This is why the Orthodox is not, and has never been, a "confessional" Church. It never accepted to be defined—and therefore limited—by the text of a Confession. Neither the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople, nor the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils can be considered as defining the fullness of Orthodoxy. If the Creed has acquired a permanent value by its inclusion in the Liturgy, the conciliar definitions are essentially *ad hoc* statements, which can be understood only against the background of the heresy condemned by them. They do, of course, reflect and witness to an absolute and unchangeable Truth, but this Truth is a living One, which exists in the organic continuity of the One Church of Christ. A Council is ecumenical, and its decision is "infallible" when it has defined *something* of this permanent and organic Truth, while no human words, and therefore no conciliar definition, can pretend to have exhausted it. Conciliar definitions, while they cannot be simply revoked without the Church ceasing to be Christ's Church, can be complemented and reinterpreted, just as the Fifth Council has complemented and interpreted Chalcedon.

And he continues by saying that,

> Doctrinal statements and definitions are made *necessary* by the life of the Church in history. One cannot avoid them for the simple reason that the human mind is constantly at work, that *it* constantly searches, and often errs. The function of the Church resides in giving it some guidance: the doctrinal continuity of the Orthodox Tradition is a witness of the presence in the Church of the Spirit of Truth. Thus, the Chalcedonian definition, just as all the definitions which preceded it or followed it, was not necessary in itself, but because there was a concrete danger of the Gospel of Christ being betrayed. This danger came from the heresy of Eutyches, who ceased to see in Christ a human nature totally consubstantial to us. And, in fact, such a heresy was and is present, explicitly or implicitly, in many aspects of Church life, especially in the East, and Chalcedon is a safeguard against it.[30]

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[28] Staniloae, "The Orthodox Conception of Tradition," 660.

[29] Cf. the suggested new formulation in Ciprian Toroczkai, "Towards an Expanded Formula of the Chalcedonian Dogmatic Definition? Fr. Dumitru Staniloae's Contribution to the Dialogue with Non-Chalcedonian Churches," GOTR 59 (2014): 145-160, here at 152. Cf. also Răduca's article in the present volume.

[30] Meyendorff, "Chalcedonians and Monophysites after Chalcedon," *op. cit.*

In this perspective, it should be further mentioned that in the Statements of the Official dialogue, the Oriental Orthodox Churches have several times affirmed that they rejected Eutyches.[31]

Regarding now St. Cyril's formula "One *physis*/nature of God the Logos incarnate", so much debated during the time of Chalcedon and after it, we should accept that it could be re-worked in-depth so as to "throw new light onto the content expressed"[32]: this was in fact the work of the Commission of theologians during the Official bilateral dialogue, with the publication of Statements. Their study and work allowed to go beyond any difference in language or the complex philosophical background and the complicated meaning of several concepts used by the Greek Fathers (nature, *physis*, essence, *hypostasis*, person). Today, after the joint doctrinal agreement, and the understanding that the real Christological faith of the Oriental Orthodox Churches is not "monophysite" in content, it is our Christian and real ecumenical duty to express the common faith in a way that is acceptable to both sides, without any further useless mental and psychological imposition, or degradation of any of the two traditions. This means that the great Greek philosophical tradition and Chalcedonian theological heritage can be mutually shared as well as the great heritage of the Oriental Orthodox.

The theologians of both Church families have underlined that the real difference between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Church is only a *terminological* or verbal one (about the Greek word *physis* and its interpretation and translation). On another side, the use of the *prefices* "in" and "out" in the phrase by Pope Leo of Rome, included in the *Horos* of the Council of Chalcedon: namely the expression "in two natures" in order to maintain the distinction of the natures in Christ after the union, was accepted by the Chalcedonians; and "out of two natures", before the union, was accepted by the non-Chalcedonians.[33] Is it not the time for the theologians to accept that the two *formulae* can be seen as similar, being thereby another way of ending the Christological dispute between the two families of Churches?[34]

### *2b. The Relevance of a Theology of the Holy Spirit*

Therefore, the question that naturally arises is the following: How is the Church capable of redefining an earlier *formula* of faith, which caused so much hostility and animosity between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox communities that otherwise share everything in common, such as the importance of and practice in the liturgical and patristic context, spiritual and ascetic life, and much more? How can this be possible without the guidance by the Holy Spirit, as this is the deep belief of the Orthodox tradition?

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[31] See the appendix of this volume for the relative texts.

[32] Staniloae, "The Orthodox Conception of Tradition," 660.

[33] For instance, see V. C. Samuel, "One Incarnate Nature of God the Word," in *Does Chalcedon divide or Unite?*, eds. Paulos Gregorios, William H. Lazareth and Nikos Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC, 1981), 90.

[34] See the article of Getatchew Haile, "The Christology of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church," published in the present volume.

The Church as a living Body is always and really guided by the Spirit of God, capable of clearly admitting the insufficiency of its historical and human life, insofar as it is still *in via* towards the coming Kingdom of God. A robust theology of the Holy Spirit, which breathes wherever He likes, would ascribe to the Church freedom from any natural, ethnic, or cultural ties that prevent its renewal towards unity, according to Christ's will (John 17:21). In the context of theological dialogue, this requires of course the work and study of the theologians chosen by the Church who themselves have to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

Without denouncing the particular traditions formulated since the occurrence of the division, a severe theological endeavour needs to take seriously into account the role of the Holy Spirit, Who provides the people of God with the *freedom* to employ even new terms and formulations whenever this is necessary. Such an attitude allows to make re-interpretations also in the context of our bilateral dialogue, being at the same time "in solidarity" and without contradicting the content of the past definitions, and bringing sufficiently to light what earlier *formulae* did not succeed in elucidating fully in relation to the mystery of God. Ecclesial faith and life cannot remain underdeveloped throughout the centuries and unto the ages, since they represent the actual situation of the Body of Christ with regard only to his human side.

Ultimately, all, theologians, officials of the Church and others, must also admit that even the most nuanced theological terminology always fails to adequally expresses *all* the aspects of the divine mystery once and fully revealed in history in the Person and life of Jesus Christ. Moreover, and in a parallel way, the Churches and the faithful should be ready to admit their own failures and insufficiencies on their human side, so as to be able to work towards a healing of historical breaches that cause unpleasant splits onto the Body of Christ. This is possible only with the power of the Holy Spirit.

### *2c. An Eschatological Outlook*

A comprehensive theology of the Holy Spirit will also manifest the relevance of an *eschatological outlook (and ontology)* in the midst of the debate around the need for assimilating the different doctrinal *formulae* to achieve the most proper *synthesis*. As it has been rightly argued[35] Eastern Christianity in general is characterized by an overemphasis on a meta-historical, liturgical perception of reality, which also accounts for a strong eschatological orientation. Without in principle denouncing the historical reality, due to the central role that the Eucharist in particular, and the divine Liturgy in general occupy in the ecclesial experience and life of the Church, the Kingdom of God is given a primary role in manifesting the very truth of reality.

[35] Cf. for instance John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary Press, 1985), 15-26, 123-142; idem, "Implications ecclésiologiques de deux types de pneumatologie," in *Communio Sanctorum. Mélanges offerts à Jean-Jacques von Allmen* (Genève, Labor et Fides, 1982), 141-154; republished in: Métropolite Jean (Zizioulas) de Pergame, *L'Eglise et ses institutions*, textes réunis par l'Archimandrite Grigorios Papathomas et Hyacinthe Destivelle, O.P. (Paris, Cerf, 2011), 29-47.

Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon[36] by existentially re-working the sacramental theology of the prolific writer of the 7th century, St. Maximus the Confessor, argues for a new ontological account that overturns the understanding of causality as it is evident in our everyday, historical condition. In this light and while according to our experience, echoing the perspective of the ancient thought that the past comes first, and has priority over the future, following in this respect the natural, deterministic sequence of things, in its Christian understanding the future causes things to be, namely it has an *ontological* priority over the past. In this perspective, the past *formulae*, without losing their significance as a preliminary step on the part of the early Church to define the Apostolic faith and describe aspects of the mystery of salvation, will be finally judged as true only at the eschata, when the eschatological state of things will be fully manifested. Therefore, by taking into account this quite creative and fruitful perception of an eschatological ontology, the Church is not only allowed but it is also obliged to follow the restorative breath of the Holy Spirit which makes all things new again, without the fear of deviating from the once fully revealed and recorded truth. An eschatological ontology then makes possible the expression of the saving truth in new formations when this will facilitate the efforts towards the overcoming of any breach for the sake of Church unity. Any terminological or cultural misunderstanding or division is by no means justified from a theology and a Church that is constantly guided by the Holy Spirit which leads them to the realization of the fullness of truth. Therefore any blind insistence on the external aspects or wording of the past *formulae*, besides the justifiable reservation one might have against a threat of relativism, often leads to a possible departure from the *regula fidei*, to the extent that the forms of the dogma (in Greek, Syriac and other languages and expressions) gain priority over the content of faith. This is in fact the real case with the terminological impasse ensuing from the Greek philosophical terms employed by the Chalcedon *Horos* and the Cyrilian terminoly, which more or less caused in principle the split between the two families.

This eschatological "outlook"[37] in theology, and not as it was often considered by scholastic textbooks as the last chapter of Christian Dogmatics, can become very useful, to the degree that it provides the Church with freedom and space to re-interpret its own faith by using the most adequate conceptual tools over the centuries. The Church, regarded as the living Body of Christ, should not be in fear of any formal change or even reformation that will further elucidate the mystery of redemption, in clearer and more comprehensive terms than the earlier forms which are more or less bound by a specific context, that is the Hellenistic context in that time dominant but not any more. This does not account for a doctrinal *relativism* resulting from a continuous translation of faith in the contemporary idiom. On the contrary, the Holy Spirit will present the

[36] Cf. John D. Zizioulas, *The Eucharistic Communion and the World*, ed. Luke Ben Tallon (London: T & T Clark, 2011), 39-82.

[37] John D. Zizioulas, "Déplacement de la perspective eschatologique," in *La Chrétienté en débat*, eds. G. Alberigo et al. (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1984), 89-100. The same paper is now published in Métropolite Jean (Zizioulas) de Pergame, *L'Eglise et ses institutions*, op. cit., 459-473.

Church with the necessary time (*kairos*) that accounts for the necessary reformation or change without any fear of doctrinal deviation that would cause greater problems or would lead to a deepening of the past animosity and controversy. The equivalent of change and freedom in the Church is not relativism of tradition or faith, but the distinction in, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which carefully paves the way towards a deeper experience of faith, until the end of times.

### *2d. Contextual Hermeneutics*

A sort of a petrified and ideological perception of patristic theology was often considered as the *sine qua non conditio* of fidelity to the Church, even though after centuries of this dominant reality, serious academic work clearly presented the fact that facets of this monolithic and homogenous construction of the past history of theology were more or less an ideological construction which did not account for the real historical context. This is for instance the case with the condemnation of the historical non-Chalcedonian leaders, namely Dioscorus of Alexandria (5$^{th}$ c.) and Severus of Antioch (6$^{th}$ c.), who while they are nowadays fully recognised by specialized theologians as Orthodox in their Christological faith and theology, have been condemned, however, by the Chalcedonians for canonical and political reasons irrelative to their Orthodox faith.

Given this reality, it seems appropriate and urgent to raise the question of the possibility of *contextual theology* and *hermeneutics* within Orthodox thought. The idea of *contextual theology* implies that there is no theology in the abstract—no ahistorical, unaltered and timeless tradition, "not text without a context"; theology occurs only in specific historical and cultural contexts and in response to specific questions and challenges. If one takes into consideration the specific questions that the Chalcedon Council and the non-Chalcedonian theologians attempt to address, surprisingly enough one would find that both struggled for a definition of the very same faith, by using however different conceptual tools, with different mentalities in the context of different theological schools (mainly Antioch and Alexandria).

This shows the very need of a contextual theology or rather a contextual *hermeneutics*[38] that will go beyond a simple historical, anachronistic interpretation of theology and history, not viewed only by the so to say "winners" of Chalcedon (the so-called Chalcedonians who imposed their views). This contextual approach can shed light onto the various hidden circumstances and conditions that play an important role in the subsequent developments, from the time of Chalcedon until today. It can provide a useful means of overcoming the still dominant mutual, official, ecclesiastical estrangement, to the degree that it will show that theology and Church history are a more complex reality than it is often considered by various conservatives or even fundamentalists of both sides. Alongside a very deep historical work is needed together with a careful

[38] Cf. Aristotle Papanikolaou, "From Sophia to Personhood: The Development of the 20th c. Orthodox theology from S. Bulgakov through V. Lossky and D. Staniloae to Metropolitan John D. Zizioulas," unpublished paper presented at the Seminar organized by the Volos Academy for Theological Studies with support from the Virginia Farah Foundation, Athens, Greece (May, 2016).

theological interpretation of the common tradition so as to elucidate the core elements of the common faith devoid of any ideological construction or cultural sovereignty of the one over the other. For this purpose, Eastern Orthodoxy is necessitated to further address the following question that naturally arises from an adoption of a contextual hermeneutical methodology: Is Chalcedonian Orthodox theology exclusively wedded to Greek philosophical categories, or could it continue to elucidate the mystery of the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ by legitimizing the use of other theological categories, including those of the Oriental Orthodox?

*3. In place of a Conclusion*

One thing that it is made evident from an exploration in Church history and theology is that Church unity is not a ready made or given condition, but a *gift* of the Spirit that will be bestowed on the Churches when they become ready to encounter each other, with knowledge and work, and in a spirit of freedom, humility and love, in order to heal all the paradox divisions in the perspective of an undivided Church, the real and full Body of Christ. This is a common goal given to the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox families through their present theological and pastoral dialogue, in an era when increasing fundamentalism and religious Muslim radicalism challenges the very existence, presence and witness of historic and traditional Orthodox communities, especially in the Middle East.

# Part II:
# Oriental Orthodox Perspectives

# The Christology of the Coptic Orthodox Church

*Fr. Shenouda M. Ishak and Dn. Anthony Bibawy*

## *1. Introduction*

The Christology of the Coptic Orthodox Church is none other than the Miaphysite Alexandrian Christology as expounded by its great theologians and patriarchs, mainly Athanasius (20th) and Cyril of Alexandria (24th), and defended thereafter by their successors, the most prominent being Dioscorus (25th), Timothy II (Aelurus) (26th), and Theodosius (33rd). This Christological tradition is based on the elucidation of several Scriptural passages, primarily *John* 1:14: "the Word became flesh"; as well as *Philippians* 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation (Gr. ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν; lit: "emptied Himself"), taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross". According to such passages and in agreement with Nicene Orthodoxy, in the understanding of these Egyptian Fathers the *Logos*, the Son, the Word, is eternally begotten of the Father and equal to Him, being of the same essence with Him (*homoousios*). Nevertheless, He is the same Word, *Logos*, and Son, who took upon Himself a full humanity with body, soul, and spirit, and became consubstantial with us therefore becoming Emmanuel, i.e. God with us. Thus, He has a double consubstantiality, with the Father according to His divinity, and with us in His humanity, forming "one composite nature and *hypostasis*" but without mixing, confusion, or alteration.

For the Alexandrian Fathers, these were basic and necessary understandings of the nature of Christ and no different than the Antiochenes, but there was further elucidation needed as to the relationship between His divinity and humanity. The debates with the Antiochenes and those sympathetic to their Christology were founded upon different understandings of this relationship between the divinity and humanity in the Person of Christ. For the Alexandrians, Christ is one Lord, one Son, one nature, one *hypostasis*, one activity, and one will, i.e. He is the "one incarnate nature of the divine *Logos*".[1] As is stated in the pre-communion confession at the end of the divine liturgies used in the Coptic Orthodox Church: "Amen. Amen. Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and confess to the last breath; that this is the Life-giving Flesh that Your Only-Begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ took from our lady, the lady of us all, the holy Mother of God, Saint Mary. He made It One with His divinity without mingling, without confusion, and without alteration (...) Truly, I

[1] The appellation of "Miaphysites" is always used by the Oriental Orthodox Churches to express the Orthodox formula of St. Cyril of Alexandria "One incarnate nature of the divine *Logos*".

believe that His divinity departed not from His humanity for a single moment nor the twinkling of an eye (...)"

This was not merely a misunderstanding and difference of semantics based on differences of terminologies and definitions between the two Christological schools, but it was based upon different ontological premises that have serious implications on fundamental Trinitarian, soteriological, sacramental, and anthropological Christian theologies. Unfortunately, these differences persist until our day and time to varied degrees between the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian Churches (Oriental Orthodox; Miaphysite)[2] in spite of ongoing ecumenical dialogue among the two groups.

In the following sections, the contribution of some of these Egyptian Fathers to the understanding of Coptic Orthodox Christology will be elaborated in a chronological fashion beginning with Athanasius in the fourth century until Theodosius in the sixth century at the time of Justinian I.

### *2. Athanasius*

When Athanasius, the 20th Patriarch of Alexandria, wrote most of his works discussing the nature of Christ, it was in the setting of the Arian controversy that consumed the great majority of his patriarchate and life. The main focus of his anti-Arian works was apologetic in responding to the attacks of the Arians against the doctrine of the divinity of the Son and His equality with the Father. However, his Christology was not limited to mere anti-Arian apologetics and polemics. The depth of his understanding of the Person of Christ was much more comprehensive and permeating into the divine economy for the salvation, redemption, and restoration of humanity to immortality and incorruption.

The importance of the eternity of the Son and His equality with the Father was not just an argument revolving around ontology, but equally so the sufficiency of the Ransom of the Cross for all of humanity and the restoration of the image of God in which man was created. The Ransom was sufficient because He is the sinless God Who took flesh and offered Himself of His own will as the pure and impeccable Sacrifice on behalf of Adam's transgression and for the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrifice was eternal because He is the eternal God, Son of the Father, Who offered Himself up once for all. He is the only One Who is able to restore the Image since He is God after Whose image man was created. Since He is the Life and the Resurrection, only He can bring man back to immortality and incorruption through His Resurrection.

The following quotes express these aspects of Athanasius' Christology:

> The Word perceived that corruption could not be got rid of otherwise than through death; yet He Himself, as the Word, being immortal and the Father's Son, was such as could not die. For this reason, therefore, He assumed a body capable of death, in order that it, through belonging to the Word Who is above all, and, itself remaining incorruptible through His indwelling, might thereafter put an end to corruption for all others as well, by the grace of the resurrection. It was by surrendering to death the body which He had taken, as an offering and

[2] The non-Chalcedonian, or Oriental Orthodox family of Churches includes the Coptic Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic, Malankara Orthodox Syrian (Indian) Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo, and Eritrean Orthodox Täwaḥədo Churches.

> sacrifice free from every stain, that He forthwith abolished death for His human brethren by the offering of the equivalent. For naturally, since the Word of God was above all, when He offered His own temple and bodily instrument as a substitute for the life of all, He fulfilled in death all that was required. Naturally also, through this union of the immortal Son of God with our human nature, all men were clothed with incorruption in the promise of the resurrection. For the solidarity of mankind is such that, by virtue of the Word's indwelling in a single human body, the corruption which goes with death has lost its power over all.[3]
>
> What, then, was God to do? What else could He possibly do, being God, but renew His Image in mankind, so that through it men might once more come to know Him? And how could this be done save by the coming of the very Image Himself, our Saviour Jesus Christ? Men could not have done it, for they are only made after the Image; nor could angels have done it, for they are not the images of God. The Word of God came in His own Person, because it was He alone, the Image of the Father, Who could recreate man made after the Image.
>
> In order to effect this re-creation, however, He had first to do away with death and corruption. Therefore He assumed a human body, in order that in it death might once for all be destroyed, and that men might be renewed according to the Image. The Image of the Father only was sufficient for this need.

He then proceeds to give his famous illustration of a stained portrait that can only be re-drawn if the subject of the portrait comes and sits for it again.[4]

> Who was made the Ransom for the sins of all.[5]

The clarity and scope of Athanasius' Christological teaching is further demonstrated in his *Letter to Epictetus*. From this *Letter* "we understand that some heterodox groups, having proceeded on the assumption, incidentally combated by Athanasius, that the Manhood of Christ was a *Hypostasis* or Person, and since the Trinity is a trinity of Persons, not of Essences, they argued that if Christ is truly man having a distinct personality from the Son then the Triad will be a Tetrad. To avoid this, one class identified the *Logos* and the Man, either by assuming that the *Logos* was changed into flesh, or that the flesh was itself non-natural and of the Divine Essence. The other class excluded the Man Jesus born of the Virgin from the Trinity, explaining His relation to God on the lines of the heretics Marcellus and his pupil Photinus or the Nestorians".[6]

Thus he writes:

> 8. (…) Again, they will blush deeply who have even entertained the possibility of a Tetrad instead of a Triad resulting, if it were said that the Body was derived from Mary. For if (they argue) we say the Body is of one Essence with the Word, the Triad remains a Triad; for then the Word imports no foreign element into it; but if we admit that the Body derived from Mary is human, it follows, since the Body is foreign in Essence, and the Word is in it, that the addition of the Body causes a Tetrad instead of a Triad.
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> 9. When they argue thus, they fail to perceive the contradiction in which they involve themselves. For even though they say that the Body is not from Mary, but is coessential with the Word, yet none the less (the very point they dissemble, to avoid being credited with their real opinion) this on their own premises can be proved to involve a Tetrad. For as the Son,

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[3] Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, Tr. and ed. by a religious of C.S.M.V. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998), II. 9, 35.

[4] Ibid., III. 13-14, 40-42.

[5] Ibid., VI. 40, 73-74.

[6] Shenouda M. Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon* (Denver, CO: Outskirts Press, 2013), 19.

according to the Fathers, is coessential with the Father, but is not the Father Himself, but is called coessential, as Son with Father, so the Body, which they call coessential with the Word, is not the Word Himself, but a distinct entity. But if so, on their own shewing, their Triad will be a Tetrad. For the true, really perfect and indivisible Triad is not accessible to addition as is the Triad imagined by these persons. And how do these remain Christians who imagine another God in addition to the true one? For, once again, in their other fallacy one can see how great is their folly. For if they think because it is contained and stated in the Scriptures, that the Body of the Saviour is human and derived from Mary, that a Tetrad is substituted for a Triad, as though the Body created an addition, they go very far wrong, so much so as to make the creature equal to the Creator, and suppose that the Godhead can receive an addition. And they have failed to perceive that the Word is become Flesh, not by reason of an addition to the Godhead, but in order that the flesh may rise again. Nor did the Word proceed from Mary that He might be bettered, but that He might ransom the human race. How then can they think that the Body, ransomed and quickened by the Word, made an addition in respect of Godhead to the Word that had quickened it? For on the contrary, a great addition has accrued to the human Body itself from the fellowship and union of the Word with it. For instead of mortal it is become immortal; and, though an animal body, it is become spiritual, and though made from earth it entered the heavenly gates. The Triad, then, although the Word took a body from Mary, is a Triad, being inaccessible to addition or diminution; but it is always perfect, and in the Triad one Godhead is recognized.[7]

Although the Nestorian controversy had not yet occurred, Athanasius indirectly anticipates this particular weakness in Antiochene Christology approximately a century earlier.

### *3. Cyril of Alexandria*

Cyril of Alexandria, the 24th Patriarch of Alexandria, continued in the Christological tradition of Athanasius. His earlier writings prior to the Nestorian controversy were mostly exegetical but imbued with dogmatic teachings, particularly Christological to continue answering the Arian factions still present and active along with Jews and pagans in Alexandria. Once he got word of Nestorius' opposition to the title of "*Theotokos*",[8] and felt that there was some resulting disturbance within the monastic communities in Egypt, he wrote his letter to the monks of Egypt in 429. Cyril's concern was not that this was merely an injustice to the Holy Virgin Mary, but much more significantly a heresy against Emmanuel, the Son of God Who took flesh and was born from her.

From Nestorius' sermons as well as his replies to the first two letters written to him by Cyril, it became much more evident that Nestorius was distinguishing the Son of God from the man Jesus such that they were not unified in nature or *hypostasis*, but rather only by grace or conjunction.[9] This

[7] *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* [NPNF], ed. Ph. Schaff, and H. Wace (repr. Grand Rapids, 1951), second series, vol. 4, 573-574.

[8] Nestorius' preference for the title *Christotokos* is discussed in John A. McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), 27-29.

[9] Nestorius preached a *prosopic* union with the understanding that *prosopon* could be used in two different senses, either "subjectivity" or "person" similar to *hypostasis*, or "face; mask," i.e. the appearance of something or someone. The meaning of *prosopic* union for Nestorius was that Christ was two *prosopon* (i.e. two subjects) that are interconnected so that the perception or appearance of

created the same concern and more so for Cyril than what Athanasius had expressed in his *Epistle to Epictetus*. If the Word had not made that flesh His own resulting in one Christ, one nature, and one *hypostasis*, then God is no longer a trinity, but a quaternity with there being a fourth *hypostasis*, the Christ or the man Jesus, worshiped along with the Holy Trinity. Furthermore, if the Word had not suffered and died in the flesh then redemption was not fulfilled. Consequently, if it is not the flesh of the Son of God that is partaken of in the Eucharist, then that flesh is not life-giving, i.e. that of a mere man, making it useless and we would thus not be granted immortality and incorruption by partaking of it.

The following quotes from Cyril of Alexandria's works should give a fuller picture of the key aspects of his Christology.

*3a. Double Consubstantiality*

In his letter to Acacius of Melitene, St. Cyril explains:

> (…) who was begotten before ages from the Father according to divinity and 'in recent days' for us and for our salvation was begotten of Mary, the Holy Virgin, according to His humanity, that the same one is consubstantial with the Father according to His divinity and consubstantial with us according to His humanity (…) He is the same before ages and 'in recent days', and clearly that He is from God the Father as God, and from a woman according to the flesh as man. For how might He be thought to be consubstantial with us according to His humanity and yet begotten of the Father according to His divinity, I say, unless the same one is thought to be and said to be God and man as well?[10]

*3b. Hypostatic Union*

One of Cyril's primary concerns was preserving the single-subjectivity of Christ while maintaining the integrity of His divinity and humanity. He expressed this in terms of a *hypostatic* union. "The person of the *Logos* is the sole personal subject of all the conditions of his existence, divine or human. The *Logos* is, needless to say, the sole personal subject of all his own acts as eternal Lord (the creation, the inspiration of the ancient prophets, and so on), but after the incarnation the same one is also the personal subject directing all his actions performed within this time and this space, embodied acts which form the context of the human life of Christ in Palestine. The phrase 'the selfsame' recurs time and again in his writings as a way of insisting on this doctrine of single-subjectivity as the keystone of the entire Christology debate".[11]

The *hypostatic* union (*henosis kath' hypostasin*) means that, for Cyril, "the union of *two* distinct levels of reality, Godhead and manhood, takes place dynamically because there is only one individual subject presiding over both, the one person of the incarnate deity. He was well aware, however, that *hypostasis* had another technical meaning (...) connoting 'concretely realized existence' or

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them in the end becomes one *prosopon*. For further discussion concerning Nestorius' Christology, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 126-174.

[10] Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 178f.

[11] Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ*, trans. and ed. J. A. McGuckin (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 40-41.

simply 'real'. He delights in running the *two* associations together in his use of '*hypostatic* union'; that is (a) the union is effected because there is only one personal subject of the divine and human actions, the same one being at once God and Man, and (b) the union is a real and concrete event, or as we might say 'a substantive reality' not a cosmetic exercise".[12]

In his *Third Letter to Nestorius* (par. 4), Cyril "talks of the *hypostatic* union as a 'natural union', by which he means a radically concrete union 'such as the soul of man has with its own body'".[13]

In his *Second Letter to Nestorius* (paragraphs 4 and 6), Cyril proposed the doctrine of *hypostatic* union to summarize his central objections to Nestorius' theories:

> Because the Word *hypostatically* united human reality to himself 'for us and for our salvation,' and came forth from a woman, this is why He is said to have been begotten in a fleshly manner (…) but if we reject this *hypostatic* union as either impossible or unfitting, then we fall into saying that there are two sons.

The *hypostatic* union epitomizes Cyril's key point about the Lord Christ being one. It demands a clear affirmation that the *Logos* was the sole direct subject of all the incarnate acts, and this was something Nestorius was loath to admit so simply. Again, in his third letter, Cyril used the phrase to push him towards such a view: "We reject the term conjunction (*synapheia*) as being insufficient to signify the union (...) As we have already said, the Word of God, *hypostatically* united to the flesh, is God of all and master of all" (parag. 5; cf. Anathemas 2 and 3).

### *3c. Natural Union*

The most celebrated Christological formula of Cyril is the *Mia Physis* "One Nature", from which the faithful followers of the true Cyrillian Orthodoxy derive their name Miaphysites. It is a confession that our Lord Jesus Christ is "one incarnate nature of God the *Logos*" (Gr. μία φύσις Θεοῦ Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη). The *Mia Physis* formula, therefore, means "One *Physis* of God the Word made flesh". Cyril used the "natural union" along with the "*hypostatic* union" to make clear that any dividing of the one Person, Jesus Christ, the *Logos* incarnate, is altogether impossible.

In Cyril's letter 17, the Third Letter to Nestorius, written on behalf of the Synod which he held in Alexandria in late 430, the "natural union" (ἕνωσις φυσική) is expressed in the following words:

> 4. (…) We do not say that the Word of God has dwelt in Him who was born of the Holy Virgin, as if in an ordinary man, for this might imply that Christ was a God-bearing man. Even though it is said that: 'The Word dwelt among us' (*John* 1:14) and 'all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily' in Christ (*Colossians* 2:9), nonetheless we understand that in terms of His becoming flesh we must not define the indwelling in His case as if it were just the same as the way He is said to dwell in the saints; for He was naturally united to, but not

[12] McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 212.

[13] Ibid., fn. 66.

changed into, flesh, in that kind of indwelling which the soul of man can be said to have with its own body.

5. There is, therefore, One Christ and Son and Lord, not as though a man simply had a conjunction with God as though in a unity of honour or sovereignty, for equality of honour does not unite natures. Indeed Peter and John have equality of honour with one another since they are both apostles and holy disciples, but these two are not one. We do not conceive the manner of the conjunction in terms of juxtaposition (for this is not enough for a natural union, nor indeed in terms of a relational participation in the way that 'being joined to the Lord we are one spirit with Him' as it is written (*1 Corinthians* 6:17). In fact we reject the term 'conjunction' as being insufficient to signify the union.[14]

The Third of the Twelve Anathematisms of Cyril and his synod, subjoined to the above-quoted letter 17 rejects any separation of the two subsistences (*hypostases*) after the union, since they are brought together in "a natural union" ("ἕνωσιν φυσικήν"). Thus it states: "If anyone shall after the [*hypostatic*] union divide the *hypostases* in the one Christ, joining them by that connexion alone, which happens according to worthiness, or even authority and power, and not rather by a coming together, which is made by natural union: let him be anathema".[15]

### *3d. Four Adverbs*

In his *letter* 39 written to John of Antioch, Cyril states what was understood later on to be "the four adverbs":[16]

(...) for there is One Lord Jesus Christ (*1 Corinthians* 8:6), even though we do indeed take cognizance of the difference of natures *out of which* we say the ineffable union was formed.

9. Those who say that there was a mixture or confusion or blending of God the Word with the flesh, let your Holiness think fit to stop their mouths, for such people are probably spreading such rumours about me, as though I had thought or said this. But I am so far from thinking anything of the kind that I consider that anyone who thinks there could ever be the shadow of a change (*James* 1:17) in the divine nature of the Word must be completely mad. For he ever remains what he is and does not change or undergo alteration. Moreover, all of us confess that the divine Word is impassible, even if in his all-wise economy of the mystery he is seen to attribute to himself the sufferings that befall his own flesh. What is more, the all-wise Peter says: 'And so Christ has suffered for us in the flesh,' and not in the nature of the ineffable deity (*1Peter* 4:1). He bears the suffering of his own flesh in an economic appropriation to himself, as I have said, so that we may believe him to be the Saviour of all…[17]

### *3e. Distinction "Only in Contemplation"*

For Cyril, the *hypostatic* and natural union effected through the incarnation in the one Christ and one Son no longer allows the language of "two natures"[18] or any

[14] *Ep.* 17:4-5, quoted as trans. by McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 269.

[15] NPNF, second series, vol. 14, 211.

[16] Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 255-285, cf. without commingling (or confusion) (*asyngchytos*), without change (*atreptos*), without separation (*achoristos*) and without division (*adiairetos*).

[17] St. Cyril, *letter 39*, parag(s). 8-9, in McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 346-347.

[18] [Editor's note:] St. Cyril admits the Orthodoxy of two nature language (under specific qualifications excluding a sense of double personhood); see H. Van Loon, *The Dyophysite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 96 (Boston: Brill, 2009); John A.

sort of duality even though He is fully divine and fully human. Any sort of dualistic language after the union would suggest that a full union of natures had not occurred. That being stated, he does allow for the mind to perceive only by contemplation how the two can be joined together. Thus in his letter to Acacius of Melitene, he writes (*Ep. 40*, paragraphs 12-14):

> 12. (…) when we have the idea of the elements of the one and unique Son and Lord Jesus Christ, we speak of two natures being united; but after the union, the duality has been abolished and we believe the Son's nature to be one, since he is one Son, yet become man and incarnate. Though we affirm that the Word is God on becoming incarnate and made man, any suspicion of change is to be repudiated entirely because he remained what he was, and we are to acknowledge the union as totally free from merger.
>
> 13. (...) we have written in the Chapters: 'Whoever allocates the terms to two persons or subjects and attaches some to the man considered separately from the Word of God, some as divine to the Word of God the Father alone, shall be anathema'. By no manner of means have we abolished the difference between the terms though we have caused their separate division to a Son, the Word of the Father, and to a man thought of as a separate woman-born son, to be discarded. The nature of the Word is, by general consent, one but we recognize that he is incarnate and became man, as I have already stated.
>
> 14. (…) Accordingly when the mode of the incarnation is the object of curiosity the human mind is bound to observe two things joined together in union with each other mysteriously and without merger, yet it in no way divides what are united but believes and firmly accepts that the product of both elements is one God, Son, Christ and Lord.[19]

So no distinction was possible in reality as such. Only a purely rational distinction can be made.

### *3f. One Activity and One Will*

A Christology of *hypostatic* and natural union allows for only one will and one activity in Christ whether it be His sayings, His suffering, His miracles, or any other activity attributed to the one Incarnate *Logos*. One example of Cyril's teaching on this point is from his *Quod Unus sit Christus* (i.e. That Christ is One) written *c.* 438 as a dialogue. Here are some selections from this dialogue by way of dispute with Hermias represented by the letter "B" and St. Cyril's reply represented by the letter "A":

> "B. So in the case of the evangelical and apostolic preaching, one must not divide the words or the acts in this way?"
>
> "A. Certainly not, at least not as referring to two persons or two *hypostases* divided from one another and completely diverging into distinct and separate spheres. For there is only one Son, the Word who was made man for our sake. I would say that everything refers to Him, words and deeds, both those that befit the deity, as well as those which are human".

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McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Christological Controversy. Its history, theology and texts*, Supplements, 23 to Vigiliae Christianae (Leiden-New York-Cologne: Brill, 1994; repr. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004) and articles in this volume (including note 25 in the article by John A. McGuckin).

[19] Cyril of Alexandria, *Select Letters* ed. and tr. by L. R. Wickham (Oxford, 1983) 49, 51; quoted in Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 287-288.

"B. So even if He is said to have been wearied by the journey (*John* 4:6), to have hungered (*Matthew* 4:2), and to have fallen asleep (*Matthew* 8:24), would it be proper, tell me, to attribute these things which are petty and demeaning to God the Word"?

"A. Such things would not be at all fitting to the Word, if we considered him nakedly, as it were, not yet made flesh, or before He had descended into the self-emptying. Your thoughts are right on this. But once He is made man and emptied out, what harm can this inflict on Him? Just as we say that the flesh became His very own, in the same way the weakness of that flesh became His very own in an economic appropriation according to the terms of the unification. So, He is 'made like His brethren in all things except sin alone' (*Hebrews* 2:17). Do not be astonished if we say that He has made the weakness of the flesh His own along with the flesh itself. He even attributed to himself those external outrages that came upon Him from the roughness of the Jews, saying through the voice of the Psalmist: 'They divided my garments among them, and cast lots for my clothes' (*Psalm* 22:18), and again: 'All those who saw me sneered at me, they wagged their tongues, they shook their heads' (*Psalm* 22:7).[20]

A (…) Since He is God by nature, He is conceived of as beyond suffering, and then He chose to suffer so that He might save those under corruption, and so became like those on earth in all respects, and underwent birth from a woman according to the flesh. As I have said, He made His very own a body capable of tasting death and capable of coming back to life again, so that He Himself might remain impassible and yet be said to suffer in his own flesh. In this way He saved what was lost (*Matthew* 18:11) and openly said: 'I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his own life for the sake of the sheep'. And again: 'No one takes my life from me; I lay it down of my own accord. I have the authority both to lay it down and to take it up' (*John* 10:11, 18). It does not pertain to any one of us, nor to any common man, to have the authority to lay down his life and take it up again. Yet the Only-Begotten and True Son has laid it down and taken it up again, thereby pulling us out of the snares of death.[21]

### *3g. Formulary of Reunion (433)*

The *Formulary of Reunion* was the letter of reconciliation sent by John of Antioch with his Christological statement to Cyril to mend their split after the Council of Ephesus, 431. Even though it stated a "union of two natures", we think that the language was ambiguous enough to allow for an Antiochene interpretation of this phrase to mean that Christ remained "in two natures" after the Incarnation. Therefore, Cyril in his *Epistle 39* to John of Antioch accepted the *Formulary* with some important addenda, primarily the phrase "the same", to emphasize the *hypostatic* and natural union in the one Christ and deter from any Antiochene interpretation. Unfortunately, we think that this did not suffice in averting criticism on both sides. The ardent anti-Nestorians criticized Cyril for accepting the *Formulary* and the Antiochenes felt that Cyril had reneged on his previous stance. Cyril had no choice but to clarify his position in letters to Acacius of Melitene and Succensus of Diocaesarea restating his belief in the *hypostatic* and natural union.

Over time, it became blatantly obvious that the Antiochenes were readily willing to anathematize Nestorius (except Theodoret of Cyrrhus who only did so under pressure in session VIII of the Council of Chalcedon) yet continue to preach Nestorianism under the names of its founders, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Therefore, it appeared that the *Formulary of Reunion*

[20] McGuckin, *On the Unity of Christ*, 107.

[21] Ibid. 127f.

had no real effect in reconciling the two opposed Christologies of Alexandria and Antioch.[22]

*Physis* for the Alexandrians was understood as a double notion of physical attributes and concurrently a concrete reality. Therefore, *physis* was in a sense considered to be synonymous with *hypostasis* with the understanding that *hypostasis* meant a concrete individual reality.[23]

Therefore, as Timothy II (Aelurus) clarified in his *Refutation of the Synod of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo*: "There is no nature (i.e. *substantia*) which has not [its] *hypostasis*, and there is no *hypostasis* which exists without its *prosopon*; if, then, there are two natures, there are of necessity two *prosopa*; but if there are two *prosopa*, there are also two Christs, as these new teachers preach".[24]

This is what has separated the Antiochenes from Cyril and the Coptic Orthodox Church since the fifth century until our day and time. We think that the *Formulary of Reunion* did not provide a solution, because the "union of two natures" for the Antiochenes meant a union of attributes and not concrete realities in the fuller understanding of *physis*.

The sensitivity to this very point and the rejection of any manner of two-nature Christology after the incarnation is expressed by Dioscorus and the Second Council of Ephesus: According to the Acts of the Second Council of Ephesus (449 A.D.), which was preserved and read in the first session of the Council of Chalcedon (paragraphs 492-495): "492. Dioscorus bishop of Alexandria said: 'Do you allow this language—speaking of two natures after the incarnation?' 493. The holy council said: 'Anathema to whoever says this!' 494. Dioscorus bishop of Alexandria said: 'Since I need both your voices and a show of hands, let anyone who is unable to cry out raise his hand.' 495. The holy council said: 'Anathema to whoever says two'!"

"During the reading at Chalcedon some Oriental bishops tried to deny this (I:496)". The reaction was as follows: "(I:497) The most devout Egyptian bishops said: "We said it then and we say it now"'.[25]

### *4. Dioscorus (444-454)*

In order to discuss the unjust condemnation of Dioscorus at the Council of Chalcedon, (451), there would need to be a detailed discussion of the minutes of the Home Synod of Constantinople, (448), the Second Synod of Ephesus, (449), as well as the Council of Chalcedon. However, this discussion is beyond the

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[22] For a detailed discussion of the *Formulary of Reunion*, its Antiochene Dyophysite interpretation, and its aftermath, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 114-121; Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 97-102, 587-606.

[23] For further elucidation on the definitions and progression of understanding of *ousia*, *physis*, *hypostasis* and *prosopon*, see McGuckin, *St. Cyril of Alexandria*, 138-145.

[24] Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 591 quoting ed. Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis* xiii, fasc. 2, 228f., as quoted in, R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), 260.

[25] Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 590, quoting Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* vol. 1 (Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 219.

scope of this article.[26] The focus here will be the exoneration of Eutyches at Second Ephesus, Dioscorus' conditional condemnation of Eutyches at the Council of Chalcedon, as well as his Miaphysite Christology.

Leo of Rome had named the Second Council of Ephesus, (449), *latrocinium*, the "Robber's Council", because his *Tome* was not read and Eutyches was not condemned in accordance with the Christology that he had expressed in that *Tome*.[27] Eutyches was even later condemned by both Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonian Fathers. Irrespective of Eutyches' real faith, the faith that he expressed at that Synod was considered Orthodox not only by Dioscorus, but by almost the entire Synod.[28] When later scrutinized at the first session of the Council of Chalcedon concerning his acceptance of Eutyches' faith, Dioscorus conditionally condemned him saying: "If Eutyches holds opinions contrary to the doctrines of the Church, he deserves not only punishment but hell fire. For my concern is for the catholic and apostolic faith and not for any human being. My mind is fixed on the Godhead, and I do not look to any person nor care about anything except my soul and the true and pure faith".[29]

The reality is that Dioscorus was not a Monophysite or Eutychian. He was rather a staunch Miaphysite and Cyrillian who rejected the Antiochene formulation of a two-nature Christology.

One of his letters was written to the monks of the Henaton, a monastery situated nine miles from Alexandria, saying: "God the *Logos*, consubstantial with the Father, at the end of the ages for our redemption became consubstantial with man in the flesh, remaining what He was before".[30]

Also in his letter to Secundinus, Dioscorus says:

> Omitting many urgent matters, this I declare: that no man shall say that the holy flesh which our Lord took from the Virgin Mary by the operation of the Holy Spirit, in a manner which he himself knows, was different from and foreign to our body (…) For Paul has said (…) 'It was right that in everything He should be made like unto his brethren' (*Hebrews* 2:16, 17), and that word, 'in everything,' does not suffer the subtraction of any part of our nature; (…) the flesh which was born of Mary was compacted with the soul of the Redeemer, that reasonable and intelligent soul, without the seed of man (…) For He was like us, for us, and with us, not in phantasy, not in mere semblance, according to the heresy of the Manichaeans, but rather in actual reality from Mary the '*Theotokos*'. To comfort the desolate, and to repair the vessel that had been broken, He came to us new (…) He became by the dispensation like us, that we by his tender mercy might be like Him. He became man (…) that we by grace might become the

[26] For the English translation of the minutes of these councils with comments, please see Price, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*. There is further commentary and discussion in the follow-up to these volumes: *Chalcedon in Context*, *Church Councils 400-700*, ed. by Richard Price and Mary Whitby (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011).

[27] Leo's *Tome* (*Ep.* 28) was a letter written to Flavian of Constantinople after the Home Synod in Constantinople, 448 CE, discussing his Christology in light of the condemnation of Eutyches. For a detailed discussion as to why the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches rejects the *Tome* of Leo, please see Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 565-681, especially 565-573.

[28] See discussion in Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 131-145.

[29] Chalcedon, the first session, parag. 168 in Price, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, 159.

[30] Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 180.

> sons of God. This I think and believe; and if any man does not think this, he is a stranger to the faith of the apostles.[31]

Timothy II (Aelurus), Dioscorus' successor, quotes from two of his letters in few lines which represent the true faith. Thus Dioscorus writes: "My declaration is that no man shall assert that the flesh, which our Lord took from holy Mary, through the Holy Spirit, in a manner known only to Himself, is different from or alien to our body".[32]

At the Council of Chalcedon, 451, where he was unjustly condemned, he makes several comments as to his true miaphysite Orthodox faith:

> We speak of neither confusion nor division nor change. Anathema to whoever speaks of confusion or change or mixture.[33]

> Clearly Flavian was deposed for this reason, that he spoke of two natures after the union. But I have quotations from the holy Fathers Athanasius, Gregory and Cyril saying in numerous passages that one should not speak of two natures after the union but of one incarnate nature of the Word. I am being cast out together with the Fathers. I stand by the doctrines of the Fathers, and do not transgress in any respect. And I have these quotations not indiscriminately or in a haphazard form but in books. As all have asked, I too request that the rest be read.[34]

> I accept 'from two [natures]'; I do not accept 'two'. I am compelled to speak brashly: my soul is at stake.[35]

> Mark, this is what I object to: there are not two natures after the union.[36]

> The 'valiant Dioscorus', proclaiming to all hearers the oneness of the incarnate nature of Christ with the homely and obvious example drawn from Christ at the Cana marriage-feast became the type of the embattled ascetic leader proof against the intellectual pitfalls laid by his adversaries.[37]

Furthermore, Anatolius of Constantinople stated: "It was not because of the faith that Dioscorus was deposed. He was deposed because he broke off communion with the lord Archbishop Leo and was summoned a third time and did not come".[38]

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Price, *op. cit.*, parag. 263, 185.

[34] Ibid., parag. 299, 190.

[35] Ibid., parag. 332, 194.

[36] Ibid., parag. 341, 196.

[37] W. H. C. Frend, *Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 141; quoting the following, *ibid*, n. 4, 141-142: "Makarius of Tkou relates how at Chalcedon Dioscorus put the argument to his accusers. 'When our Saviour Jesus Christ was invited to the marriage feast at Cana, was it in his quality as God or in his quality as man?' 'In his quality as man', they replied. 'Very well', said Dioscorus, 'And when he changed the water into wine, did he do that as God or as man?' 'Obviously as God', replied the assembly again. 'Well you see', concluded Dioscorus, 'that his divinity was never separated from his humanity and thus the separation proclaimed in the *Tome* of Leo was anathema'! See E. Amélineau, "Le Christianisme chez les anciens Coptes," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 14 (1886): 308-345 at 324.

[38] Price, *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 2, 198, session V, parag. 14. It should be noted that Leo began with excommunicating Dioscorus at least six months prior to the Council of Chalcedon. For a full discussion of this accusation against Dioscorus, see Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 480-483.

He is moreoever supposed to have written to Juvenal of Jerusalem, still at Chalcedon: "Cursed be anyone who assumes two natures in the Messiah after the indivisible unity...! Cursed be anyone who assumes in the Messiah two properties and two activities".[39]

Dioscorus is supposed to have written to Emperor Marcian: "How can the rebellious Leo have dared to open his mouth and blaspheme the Most High by saying: we must confess in the Messiah two natures and two characteristics and [two] activities, since the holy church confesses one nature of the incarnate God without mixing or change; [even in death] the divinity of my master was not separated from his humanity, not even for a moment."[40]

He furthermore stresses that the Lord Jesus Christ has never been divided in all his works. Thus, in the confession of faith which he is said to have made at Chalcedon he declares: "The Lord Jesus, Emmanuel, our God, has never been divided in all his works; but [he is] one only Lord, one only nature; he has only one will; and Godhead has been united with manhood, as the soul is united with the body. This is my declaration and confession—I, the least, Dioscorus, the poor".[41]

Concerning the same point he also says: "I know full well, having been brought up in the faith, that He has been begotten of the Father as God, and that the Same has been begotten of Mary as man. See Him walking on the sea as man, and Creator of the heavenly hosts as God; see Him sleeping in the boat as man, and walking on the seas as God; see Him hungry as man, and bestowing nourishment as God; see Him thirsty as man, and giving drink as God; see Him stoned by the Jews as man, and worshipped by angels as God; see Him tempted as man, and driving away the demons as God; and similarly of many instances".[42]

### *5. Timothy Aelurus (454-477)*

The repercussions of the Council of Chalcedon were devastating and longlasting. Those who remained loyal to Dioscorus and the Cyrillian Miaphysite faith in rejection of the two-nature Christology of the Chalcedonian definition and the *Tome* of Leo were unjustly labeled Eutychian and Monophysite. In fact, when real monophysites appeared in Egypt, Timothy II (Aelurus), the 26th Patriarch of Alexandria and successor of Dioscorus, wrote against them condemning their heresy just as he did the two-nature Christology of the Council of Chalcedon and

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[39] Aloys Grillmeier with T. Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. II, part 4, tr. O. C. Dean (London: WJK, 1996), 34, quoting from Nau, F., in *Journal Asiatique* X, 1, 278, with Syriac text, 64.

[40] Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, quoting Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis*, 254, with Syriac text on 36.

[41] This confession is found in a fragment of a lost work of Dioscorus in the Bohairic dialect of Coptic: ed. and trans. by W. H. P. Hatch, *Harvard Theological Review* (1926): 19, 377-384. Sellers (32, fn. 3) quoted this confession of Dioscorus with a comment saying: "if it is not his, it undoubtedly sums up his point of view".

[42] Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon*, 32; quoting *Chron. Zacharias of Mitylene* iii, I, trans. Hamilton and Brooks, pp. 45f.; S.G.F. Perry, *The Second Synod of Ephesus*, 392.

the *Tome* of Leo.[43] This is further expressed in the *Encyclical* of Basiliscus which he drafted along with Peter the Fuller of Antioch and which was accepted at the Third Synod of Ephesus, 476, where 700 bishops attended and condemned the Council of Chalcedon and the *Tome* of Leo.

### *6. Theodosius (535-567)*

The line of non-Chalcedonian patriarchs of Alexandria remained faithful to the Cyrillian Miaphysite Christology and never accepted the Council of Chalcedon or the *Tome* of Leo. One of these fathers, Theodosius (33rd Patriarch) stands out in combination with Severus of Antioch and Anthimus of Constantinople who together worked towards a reunification of the churches after the deep schism of the Council of Chalcedon. This, unfortunately, never happened,[44] and his rejection of the Council of Chalcedon and the *Tome* of Leo led to his exile by Emperor Justinian to Constantinople until the end of his life.

### *7. Contemporary Ecumenical Movement*

The Coptic Orthodox Church began its involvement in ecumenical interchurch dialogue in the 1960s for the sake of healing the wounds of schism from which it was severely persecuted over the centuries, particularly in the two centuries between the Council of Chalcedon and the Islamic invasion of Egypt (641). The Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria always desired reconciliation, but when reconciliation was not on the table to be discussed, it underwent (at times) persecution for the sake of the faith as shown by examples like Dioscorus, Timothy II, and Theodosius.

The latest stage of this dialogue with the Orthodox Church (i.e. the Eastern/Byzantine Orthodox family of churches) had led to the First Agreed Statement in Egypt, 1989, and the Second Agreed Statement in 1990 at Chambésy, Geneva, Switzerland; both Statemenst have been recognised by the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church. This Second Agreed Statement was formally accepted by just a few churches in both families of Orthodoxy including the Coptic Orthodox Church, not by all. Therefore, there has been a recent re-initiation of the dialogue between the two families to finish what they started.[45]

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[43] For discussion concerning Timothy II's actions against the monophysites, see Ishak, *Christology and the Council of Chalcedon*, 114-123. For discussion concerning Timothy II's criticism of Leo's first and second *Tomes*, see ibid., 566-567.

[44] Justinian I took action against these three Miaphysite leaders due to the influence of Pope Agapetus I of Rome. For discussion concerning this history, see ibid., 521-523 and 667.

[45] OCP Media Network "Joint Commission for the Dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches Revamped: Communique Available". Orthodoxy Cognate Page. November 26, 2014. http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/joint-commission-for-the-dialogue-between-eastern-orthodox-oriental-orthodox-churches-revamped-communique-available/ (last accessed October 20, 2016).

There has been less theological progress in the interchurch dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches.[46] In fact, the matter of Christology has not yet been raised in formal dialogue.

Recently, the Anglican Church has signed a Christological agreed statement with the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches.[47]

The Coptic Orthodox Church continues to pray for the reunification of the churches in its liturgical supplication: "Let the schisms of the church come to an end".

[46] There was a Common Declaration signed between Pope Paul VI of Rome and Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria in 1973 in Rome which has never been recognized by the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church. In 1988, there was also a Declaration of Agreement on Christology between the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church drawn up by the Joint commission and unanimously accepted by the full membership of the commission. However, when the Common Christological Declaration was signed between Pope John Paul II and the Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Khanania Mar Dinkha IV in 1994, the previous declarations of 1973 and 1988 could not bear any weight because it is impossible to reconcile Miaphysite and Nestorian Christologies.

[47] http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/103502/Anglican-Oriental-Orthodox-Agreed-Statement-on-Christology-Cairo-2014.pdf (last accessed May 28, 2015).

# Syrian Orthodox Christology and the Chalcedonian Definition of Faith

*Metropolitan Mor Polycarpus Aydin*

"Controversy in moderation is a life-enhancing medicine,
but in excess it is a deadly poison"
(Ephrem, *Sermones de Fide*, II.139-140)

"Our great undertaking is in danger
of becoming a mere technical enterprise"
(Gregory of Nazianzus, *Discourse* 27.2)

## *I. The Starting Point*

In discussions between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churces on Christology the former have always taken the Council of Chalcedon as the starting point. In this connection two main points should be noted:

A. The 27 canons of the Council of Chalcedon have been received in the Syrian Orthodox Church.[1]
B. Its definition of faith was rejected, since
   (a) a new formula, beyond the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, was considered unnecessary, and hence unacceptable.[2]
   (b) it was seen as illogical [see below]
   (c) on the Syrian Orthodox understanding of the term "nature/ *physis*", "in two natures" was seen as heretical since it implies two hypostases (this was clearly not intended by those who drafted the definition, as is recognised today).
   (d) "from two natures", which had been in the initial draft, would have been perfectly acceptable.
   (e) While the phrase "the property of each nature being preserved" is acceptable in itself, if it is understood to refer to the two natures from which the one incarnate nature of the incarnate Christ comes, it is *not*, however, acceptable if it is understood as

[1] See *The Synodicon in the West Syrian Tradition*, I, ed. A. Vööbus, *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* [henceforth CSCO] 367-368 (Leuven: Peeters, 1975), 129-139; the manuscript, Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate ms. 8/11, is dated 1204.

[2] *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, ed. E. Schwarz [henceforth ACO] I,1,2,12-13, for Nicaea as the norm. Vööbus, *The Synodicon*, I, 129 (on the Synod of Ephesus): "The holy Synod decreed that no one (...) should lay down another (credal statement of) faith, apart from the one decreed by the holy Fathers who were gathered with the Holy Spirit in Ephesus". Cf. John of Tella (d. 538), *Profession of Faith*, ed. and tr. V. Menze and K. Akalin (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009), 66-67, with reference to the three Councils, of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), and Ephesus (431): "These are the ones which proclaim the truth to the whole world and another council in the Church is not accepted". Later on (pp. 72-73) it is stated "the 220 (Fathers at the Council of Ephesus) saw that the building (sc. of doctrine) was perfect and no longer required addition and would not admit innovation nor would be subject to decrease. They wisely placed an anathema lest anyone dare to add to it or subtract from it" (translation slightly corrected by the author).

ruling out the *communicatio idiomatum*, or interchange of properties.

*The Chalcedonian Definition of Faith*

In the doctrinal definition of faith laid down by the Council of Chalcedon there was one term (*physis*, "nature", plural *physeis*) in particular which caused trouble for the Syrian Orthodox.

In attempting to describe the relationship of the divinity to the humanity in the incarnate Christ, the Council decided upon the following formulation (the wording objected to by the Oriental Orthodox Churches is underlined):[3]

> Following the holy Fathers, we all unanimously teach that our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in humanity; truly God, the same truly human, formed from a rational soul and a body; one in essence with the Father according to Godhead, the same one in essence with us according to humanity, like us in everything, except for sin; before the ages begotten from the Father according to Godhead, in the last days the same born for us and for our salvation from the Virgin Theotokos according to humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-Begotten, made known <u>in two natures (*en dyo physesin*)</u>; without confusion,without change, without division, without separation; the difference of the natures being in no way destroyed because of the union, <u>but rather the property of each nature (*physis*)</u> being preserved, and both concurring into one *prosopon* and one *hypostasis*:[4] not as though He were parted or divided into two *prosopa*, but He is one and the same Son, Only-Begotten God, Logos, Lord, Jesus Christ.

*Standard Equivalents of Greek and Syriac Terms:*

| | |
|---|---|
| φύσις/*physis* | *kyono* 'nature' |
| ὑπόστασις/*hypostasis* | *qnumo* |
| πρόσωπον/*prosopon* | *parsupo* |
| ἰδιότης/*idiotēs* | *diloyto* 'property" |

*II. The problem:*[5] *Different Understandings of Key Terms in Christology*

Drawing the line between acceptable differences in expression and unacceptable teaching on central theological issues is not always easy. Faced with a variety of views on matters of doctrine that were seen to be unsatisfactory, the Church Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries developed their own preferred formulations on different theological topics using the analytical tools of Greek philosophy. These had the great merit of allowing for greater precision in

[3] ACO II,1,2,129-130.

[4] Since both *prosopon* and *hypostasis* are often represented in English by the single term 'person', it is important to keep the Greek terms in both Christological and Trinitarian contexts; Syriac also has separate terms, exactly corresponding to the Greek ones (see the Table). A helpful discussion of the terminological problems can be found in Severus' Letter to Maron, in, *A Collection of Letters of Severus of Antioch*, ed. E. W. Brooks, *Patrologia Orientalis* [PO] 12.2, 196-8. Both *physis* and *kyono* are given the standard translation of "nature" throughout this contribution.

[5] For a straightforward presentation of the different positions as far as the various Syriac Churches are concerned, see *The Hidden Pearl: the Syrian Orthodox Church and its Ancient Aramaic Heritage*, III, *At the Turn of the Millennium: the Syrian Orthodox Witness*, ed. S. P. Brock (Rome: Transworld Film, 2001), 25-31.

formulating doctrinal statements; unfortunately, however, because the theologians involved came from a number of different backgrounds, some of the technical terms they used were not always understood in the same way, and this, not surprisingly, led to misunderstanding and confusion.

Though much of the wording of the Chalcedonian Christological formulation is perfectly acceptable to the Syrian Orthodox (and other Oriental Orthodox) the phrase "in two natures (...) concurring into (...) one *hypostasis*" was a stumbling block for these Churches, who all regarded the statement as illogical.[6] The problem lies in the different understandings of the two terms "nature" (Greek φύσις/*physis*, Syriac, *kyono*) and "*hypostasis*" (Greek ὑπόστασις/ *hypostasis*, Syriac *qnumo*).

From the Syrian Orthodox point of view "nature"/*kyono* is very close in meaning to *qnumo*/*hypostasis*. As a result of these different understandings of the two technical terms "nature" and "*hypostasis*", the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches have ended up with verbally conflicting formulae, "in two natures"/ "one composite nature", even though their underlying intentions and understanding were clearly the same.

The basic problem lies in this: Chalcedonians understand "in two natures" to be generic, but for the Oriental Orthodox the following "one *hypostasis*" logically requires "one (individual) nature (*physis*/*kyono*)". This is clearly expressed, for example, by Severus of Antioch (d. 538), writing in Greek but preserved only in Syriac translation:[7]

> It is obvious to all who have just a modicum of training in the teachings (*dogmata*) of true religion that it is contradictory to speak of two natures (*kyone* i.e. *physeis*) with reference to the one Christ, he being one *qnumo* (i.e. *hypostasis*). For whenever one speaks of one *qnumo*, one must necessarily also speak of one nature (*kyono*).

Thus, as understood by the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Chalcedonian Definition implies "in two hypostases"—a position that both the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox consider heretical.

*The Oriental Orthodox Churches: Miaphysite, not Monophysite*

In the polemics over Christology in the sixth century, the Chalcedonian side frequently tried to portray the opponents of the Council of Chalcedon as "Eutychian",[8] implying that the Syrian Orthodox/Oriental Orthodox held that the incarnate Christ was consubstantial with the Father, but *not* with us—a heretical position which has *never* been held by the Oriental Orthodox. In the course of the late sixth and seventh centuries the term "monophysite" came into use by Chalcedonian writers in order to describe what they considered to be the Syrian

[6] It was also considered illogical by the Church of the East, but for different reasons.

[7] J. Lebon, *Severi Antiocheni Orationes ad Nephalium eiusdem ac Sergii Grammatici Epistulae mutuae*, CSCO 119, 16. For an important discussion by Severus on the usage of these terms, see his Letter to Eusebius Scholasticus, in *Patrologia Orientalis* [PO] 12.2, 23-25.

[8] This is illustrated, for example, in the Syrian Orthodox account of the Conversations held in Constantinople at the behest of the emperor Justinian in 532: see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 47 (1981): 87-121, here at 94-95.

(and Oriental) Orthodox position. While from an etymological point of view "monophysite" can indeed be understood as referring to "one (composite) nature",[9] as opposed to "only one (that is, divine) nature", in actual practice, both in the past and in our present times, this essential distinction has frequently not been made; accordingly, in order to avoid confusion and a serious misunderstanding of the Oriental Orthodox teaching,[10] the term "miaphysite" (referring to the "one (composite) nature"), on analogy with "dyophysite" (referring to the formula 'in two natures', used in Chalcedon), has in recent years been introduced, thus providing a neutral pair of terms to described the two positions, Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian. The Oriental Orthodox, including the Syrian Orthodox Church, object to being called "monophysites".

*Towards a Resolution*

In the past, the key terms *physis* and *hypostasis* have been understood by each side *only* on their *own* understanding of their meanings, which has inevitably resulted in *mis*understanding the other side's true position. Only in modern ecumenical dialogue has this been recognized and serious attempts have been made to understand the other side's position *as that other side itself understands it*.

Since the search for a single agreed formula which is received by all the Churches is both (probably) impossible, and is not desirable, in that it would be imposing uniformity rather than unity on the Churches; instead, what is of utmost importance is:

—to reach agreement on the underlying unity of faith, lying behind the conflicting formulae; this has already been achieved at various ecumenical meetings and expressed in several agreed statements. (See the selection of texts below)

—with reference to the Chalcedonian Definition: for each side to accept that the other side's formulation, correctly understood, is Orthodox. In the Chalcedonian tradition this was in fact an idea acceptable to the "neo-Chalcedonians" of the early sixth century, who were willing to accept both formulations (one and two natures).[11] In this connection, on the Syrian Orthodox side the approach of Bar Ebroyo[12] and V. C. Samuel in the passages quoted below might prove helpful.

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[9] This is the argument of Ph. Luisier in his "Il miafisismo, un termine discutibile della storiografia recente," *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 34 (2013): 299-310; a response is given by S. P. Brock, "Miaphysite, not monophysite!," *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 37, 1 (2016): 45-54.

[10] Two glaring modern examples of the misinterpretation of the term monophysite in connection with the Oriental Orthodox are cited in Brock, "Miaphysite, not monophysite!"

[11] On this point see, for example, P. Allen and C. T. R. Hayward, *Severus of Antioch* (London: Routledge, 2004), 10: "Characteristic of the *neo-Chalcedonian movement* were the attempts to reconcile the two contentious formulae 'from two natures' and 'in two natures', and to show that Cyril of Alexandria, who for Severus and his party was the touchstone of orthodoxy, was in accord with Chalcedon". Cf. A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, II.2 (London: Mowbray, 1995), 22.

[12] In the quotation from the *Candelabra of the Sanctuary*, IV.7.1, quoted below.

*Soteriology*

It is essential to keep in mind the soteriological aspect of Christology, in that Christ can only save humankind if He is fully God and fully human; thus it should be recognized that underlying the two Christologies, miaphysite and dyophysite, there are two different conceptual models of how God the Word effects salvation through the Incarnation:

—on the miaphysite model, by becoming fully human, God the Word as it were underpins humanity, and thus effects the salvation of humanity; hence it is essential to stress the oneness of Christ's incarnate "nature".[13]

—on the dyophysite model, while Christ's divinity and humanity are united as a single person (*hypostasis*), the salvation of humanity is seen as being brought about through Christ's humanity, and this is achieved at the Resurrection and Ascension; thus it is very important to maintain a distinction between the humanity and divinity of Christ during his incarnate life. (This distinction is also indicated by Severus when he states that "in two natures" can be accepted "mentally (*en theoria*)", but not "in reality").

These two conceptual models should be seen as complementary, and not as one excluding the other.

The doctrinal formula of the Council of Chalcedon has been put in the forefront of dialogue with those Churches which have not accepted its formulation. It needs to be remembered that there are other equally legitimate ways of expressing Christology, such as that of the use of a series of paradoxical statements, found especially in writers like Ephrem, Jacob of Serugh, and also in Philoxenus (see the examples under these names, below).

In conclusion, the formulation of the Council of Chalcedon should best be seen as *an* interpretation and development of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and not the *only* one (as it tends to be seen in the Chalcedonian tradition). Unity of faith, not uniformity, should be the goal; since the Incarnation is a mystery, there can be no *single* way of trying to describe it; rather it needs to be realised that there are many, equally Orthodox, ways of doing so.[14]

*III. Texts*

*Ancient texts by the main Fathers of the Syrian Orthodox tradition*

1. Saint Ephrem (d. 373)

(1) Hymns on Faith, 4:2

> The Firstborn entered the womb/ but the pure (virgin) did not suffer (anything).
> He flew down and came forth at the birth-pangs/ and the fair (virgin) became aware of him.
> Glorious but hidden is His entry,/ Lowly but revealed is His coming forth,
> for He is God at His entering/but man at His coming forth - a bewildering wonder to hear about:/ Fire entered the womb,/ put on a body - and came forth.

[13] As Pauline Allen rightly points out, "For Severus, if Christ is not truly human, then there can be no salvation for human beings" (Allen and Hayward, *Severus of Antioch*, 47).

[14] I am grateful to Sebastian Brock for his assistance in the course of writing this article, especially in providing all the otherwise unattributed English translations in C. I., below.

(2) Hymns on Faith 5:15

He gave us divinity/ we gave Him humanity.

(3) Hymns on Faith 19:10

You, Lord, have clothed your nature (*kyanak*)/ with an infirm body so that you might be able to suffer in it.

(4) Hymns on Virginity 48:15-18

Freewill succeeded in making Adam's beauty ugly,/ for he, a human being, sought to become a god.
Grace, however, made beautiful his deformities/ and God came to become a human being:
Divinity flew down/ to draw humanity up,/ for the Son had made beautiful the deformities of the servant, and so he has become a god, just as he desired. [15]

2. Jacob, bishop of Serug (d. 521)

(1) Letter 17:

(...) The Great One who became small, (...) the hidden Mystery that came out in the open - while His mysterious being was not laid bare; (...) He put on low estate in the nether regions; he who is hidden in light as in a garment was hidden in swaddling clothes after the manner of children; God, like his Father, human being, like us; complete in his divinity, complete in his humanity, the Only-Begotten to whom two wombs gave birth, the single nature who was embodied (*etgasham*) without receiving any addition (to himself), one of the Trinity who became incarnate (*etbassar*), while the Trinity remained as it was; (...) the impassible (*lo hoshusho*) who caused sufferings to suffer through his own sufferings, the immortal one who became subject to death of his own will (...)[16]

(2) Verse homily on the Ascension:[17]

He became embodied so that he might become capable of suffering/and he carried away the iniquity of the world by the sufferings of his crucifixion.

3. Philoxenus, bishop of Mabbug (d. 523):

(1) In his *Tres tractatus de trinitate et incarnatione*[18], Philoxenus points out that there are two traditions of theological language concerning the Incarnation: (a) The Word became flesh, God was embodied, was enfleshed, was inhominated [i.e. Alexandrine tradition]; and (b) The Word 'took/assumed' (...), was united, dwelt, put on, was joined [i.e. Antiochene tradition, *and* archaic]. Originally the Fathers used them all; he goes on to conclude (155). We should accept *all* these terms, using them in their correct sense, as understood by the Fathers.

(2) Profession of faith:

(...) One of the *qnume* of the Trinity came down from heaven, in the mystery of self-emptying [Phil. 2:7], and from the holy Virgin became a human being. Because He is God, and in His becoming (human) His nature (*kyono*) was not changed, and there was no addition in His

[15] Hymns on Faith and on Virginity are cited from E. Beck's edition in CSCO 154 and CSCO 223.

[16] Ed. G. Olinder, CSCO 110, 86.

[17] Translation by T. Kollamparampil, *Jacob of Serugh. Select Festal Homilies* (Rome: CIIS, 1997), 334 (lines 77-8).

[18] CSCO 9, 152-155.

*hypostasis* (*qnumo*), but He remained the Only-Begotten also after He had become embodied, for the becoming did not introduce another 'first-born' for the Only-Begotten, but it showed the Only-Begotten who is from the Father to be the first-born who is from the Virgin; for He who is the Only-Begotten in his generation from (the divine) Being, became at His Nativity the first-born from the Virgin; and because God the Word who is (born) from the Virgin is the Only-Begotten, and because He became a human being from the Virgin, He is the first-born; for the first-born is the Only-Begotten and the Only-Begotten is the first-born, He being God. The Son of God, the Son of Man/a human being, the Son of Man/human being, the Son of God; the Son of (the divine) Being, the Son of the Virgin; the Son of the Virgin, the Son of (the divine) Being; the Hidden, revealed; the Revealed, hidden; the Spiritual in bodily form; the bodily one a spiritual (Being); the Unlimited One as one limited; He who is on the (heavenly) throne is in the womb; He who is in the womb is on the throne; the Son of God the Son of Man, the Son of Man, the Son of God; the Invisible, visible, the Hidden One who is not visible becomes seen; One not subject to suffering, (now) subject to suffering; one subject to suffering (who is) not subject to suffering; the Living One dead, and the Dead One living; He who is in the heaven and inside Sheol, He who is inside Sheol is in heaven. Single is the Only-Begotten, and there is no number in Him. In the case of things that (derive) from heaven and things that (are) from the earth are individual to the Only-Begotten: there is no one and another, as those in error say: the exalted things do not belong (just) to the Exalted One, and the lowly things (just) to the Lowly One, and the divine things to God and the human to the man; rather, the lowly things belong to the Exalted One who became lowly, and the human things are believed to belong to God who became a human being: all the despicable things are to be believed to belong to the Hidden One who came to be revealed (...)[19]

### (3) Letter to the Monks of Senun:

(...) It is not possible for there to be a nature (*kyono*) that is recognised as on its own (...) without there also being a *qnumo* (i.e. *hypostasis*); nor can a *qnumo* be conceived as on its own, without it being reckoned that it also has a *prosopon*. [20]

### (4) Commentary on the Prologue of John:

Thus the Word of God, of whom it is written that He became flesh from Mary, became what He was not before, and remained that which He is without change, and He is recognized as the same—in (physical) aspect, a human being, and in power, God: not in two natures and not in two *qnume*, and not in two parts or in two likenesses; and it is not to be thought that there is one and another in Him.

Because it was by means of the inhomination (*methbarnshonutho*) that the (divine) economy (of salvation) was established, and not because of (any) doubling (*piputo*), for if doubling is thought to be in Christ, and number is determined concerning Him once He has become incarnate, then by all means the economy is nullified, for in the case of all that is double it is evident that it is numbered, and what is numbered is also necessarily to be thought of as one thing and another. And if God is one and man is the other (in the incarnate Christ), how could there be any economy in the flesh, for God would not have become human, nor would the human have been believed to be God. [21]

### (5) Commentary on the Prologue of John:

(It is alright) "to confess that the union took place from two natures (*kyone*), that is, the Godhead and the humanity". [22]

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[19] *The Discourses of Philoxenus* vol. II, ed. E. A. W. Budge (London: Asher & Co, 1894), xcvi-xcvii.

[20] CSCO 231, 11.

[21] CSCO 380, 228.

[22] CSCO 380, 237.

4. Statement of faith presented to the Emperor Justinian by the Syrian Orthodox bishops, at the theological conversations held in Constantinople in 532:

> We say that God the Word is He who, by the will of the Father, at the end of days for the sake of the salvation of human beings, became embodied from the Holy Spirit and was born from the Holy Virgin Birthgiver of God, Mary, a body ensouled with a rational and intelligible soul, passible, and consubstantial with us; and He became a human being but was not changed from that which He was. We confess that while consubstantial with the Father in His divinity He became consubstantial with us in His humanity. He who was the perfect Word, the Son of God, became a perfect human being without changed, and there was nothing that was lacking for us in our salvation (...)
>
> Therefore God the Word truly was embodied, in truth and not in semblance, with natural and blameless passions, such that He, accepting by His will for our sake these (things) in the flesh, was passible, consubstantial with us, and by His will He endured our own death, which He made for us (into) life by a Resurrection befitting God, without corruption and without mortality He first of all renewed human nature. In this manner, God the Word, who left nothing wanting and was not a phantom, did not divide into two *hypostases* (*qnume*) and two natures (*kyone*) (his) becoming embodied (*methgashmonutho*) and (his) becoming human (*methbarnshonutho*). [23]

5. John, bishop of Tella (d. 538), from his Profession of Faith:

> Now, then, the mystery is great, the love profound, and the redemption ineffable. The Immortal One died for the sake of the mortal ones. Through His death He saved them from the mortal nature, and the non-suffering one suffered for the sake of the suffering ones. The Indestructible one came down to the level of the destructible ones, and because of the fact that He cannot be destroyed, He brought them to the state of non-destructibility. [24]

6. Severus, Patriarch of Antioch (d. 538)

[His starting point is Cyril's μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη "one incarnate nature of God the Word". "*From* two natures" is acceptable, but it is only possible to speak of two natures after the union *en theoria* (as opposed to "in reality"). His preferred term for the union (also from Cyril) is σύνθεσις /*rukkobo* ('composition')].

(1) Letter 1, to Oecumenius:

> It is not those who confess the properties of the natures from which the one Christ (exists) whom we anathematize, but those who separate the properties, dividing them up between each of the natures. [25]

(2) Cathedral Homily 2:

(The angel Gabriel is represented as addressing Mary with the following words)

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[23] Book IX.15 in E. W. Brooks, *Historia Ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta*, CSCO 84 (1953), II, 117-118. English translation in G. Greatrex, R. R. Phenix and C. B. Horn, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), 349-350 (slightly corrected by the author).

[24] V. Menze and K.Akalin, *John of Tella's Profession of Faith*, Texts from Christian Late Antiquity 25, ed. and translated (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009), 80-83. The opening reflects Philoxenus' Dogmatic Letter (*Patrologia Orientalis* 41.1, 50-51 (section 23). ('Indestructable' could equally be translated 'Incorruptible').

[25] PO 12.2, 7-8, objecting to the *Tome* of Leo.

The one who is going to be conceived, the one I spoke to you about above when I was beginning on the announcement, Peace to you, full of grace, the Lord is with you, he is the Lord, the Word of God, one of the three persons (*qnume*; i.e. of the Trinity), the Power of the Father Most High, who has overshadowed (Luke 1:35). For Christ is the Power and Wisdom of God: he who without beginning, eternally and incorporeally was born of the Father, but from you he is becoming incarnate, without change, inexplicably, and without confusion. It is a body consubstantial with you that you are going to conceive and give birth to, one that is ensouled with a rational and intellectual soul, which wishes to effect the salvation of the whole state of the human race, and not just of part. [26]

(3) Cathedral Homily 23:

Out of two natures, divinity and humanity (...) we should understand a single Christ, a single *prosopon*, a single *hypostasis* (*qnumo*), a single incarnate nature of God the Word. [27]

(4) First Letter to Sergius:

He who was incarnate is also He who suffered in the flesh, while He remained, in that He is God, impassible. And if we separate Him from the statement that He suffered, we separate Him as well, at an earlier point, from the flesh in which he willingly underwent suffering. [28]

(5) Contra Grammaticum, III:

Those, therefore, who confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is one (made up) of Godhead and manhood, and that He is one prosopon, one *hypostasis* (*qnumo*), and one nature (*kyono*) of the Word Incarnate, recognize and affirm also the difference, integrity and otherness of the natures (*kyone*), of which the one Christ is ineffably formed. As they perceive this by subtle thought and contemplation of the mind, they do not take it as a ground for dividing the Emmanuel into two natures (*kyone*) after the union. [29]

## 7. Dionysius bar Salibi, Metropolitan of Amid (d. 1171)

Creedal statement:

We further believe that one of the persons (*qnume*) of the Holy Trinity, the Only-Begotten Son and Word, at the will of Himself and of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, came down from heaven while not departing from the bosom of His Father, and He tabernacled [Luke 1:35 Peshitta Bible] in the womb of the holy Virgin Mary, and became a human being while remaining God, and He was united to the flesh that was equal to ours in essence, that was ensouled with a living and rational soul.

(…) In our case, far be it that we should say that God suffered in His nature; rather, as the Doctors (of the Church) have said, we say 'God suffered in the flesh, while in His divinity He was far exalted above suffering and death. Just as we say of Peter that he died, but it is not possible that anyone could say that his soul died with his body, because the soul is exalted above death: (here) instead of a part, death is applied to the whole human person because of the union (i.e. of soul and body). Thus when we say that Christ suffered and died, we know that, as the Doctors have taught us, that was in the flesh that He suffered and died, and not in His Godhead. [30]

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[26] PO 38.2, 287.

[27] PO 37.1, 116-117.

[28] Translated by I. R. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1988), 158.

[29] CSCO 45, 106 (quoted by V. C. Samuel, 'One incarnate nature of God the Word', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR] 10/2 (1964-5): 37-53, at 45).

[30] Ed. G. Rabo, in *Parole de l'Orient*, Kaslik (forthcoming).

8. Bar Ebroyo (Barhebraeus), Maphrian[31] (or Syrian Orthodox Catholicos of the East; d. 1286)

(1) Candelabra of the Sanctuary IV, On the Incarnation:
IV.3.1 (138-141):

We say: if the *hypostasis* of our Lord Christ is one, it is necessary that His nature (*kyono*) should also be one, since His *hypostasis* is nothing other than His nature (*kyono*) with the addition of the characteristic property.

IV.3.4 (141):

We say: it is impossible in actual fact for a nature (*kyono*) to be found without a *hypostasis*, unless perhaps it is only mentally (*b-hawno*), as is the case with genera and species which are universal. Accordingly, if those two natures (*kyone*) which you (Chalcedonians) confess are in actual fact, of necessity they will be two hypostases (*qnume*) - and this is not what you confess.

IV.7.1 (186-7):

We say: this one nature (*kyono*) is not simple but double (*pipo*), namely God-man (*aloh barnosh*). Thus in His divinity He is equal with the Father and the Spirit, and in His humanity (he is equal) with us human beings (...) (190-1): We say: It is by nature (*kyono*) that Christ is perfect God and perfect human, but the nature (*kyono*) is a double one, being *from* two natures (*kyone*), divine and human (...) We say: the duality (*trayonuto*) is removed so that the union might be assured; the doubleness however, does not cease, because of the non-mixing of the natures (*kyone*) from which that one nature (*kyono*) derives.[32]

(2) Book of the Dove, chapter 4 (written near the end of his life):

When I had given much thought and pondered on the matter, I became convinced that these quarrels of Christians are not a matter of factual substance, but rather, one of words and terms. For they all confess Christ our Lord to be perfect God and perfect human, without any commingling, mixing or confusion of the natures. This bi-pinnate likeness is termed by one party [i.e. Syrian Orthodox] a "nature" (*kyono*), by another [i.e. the Chalcedonians] a "*hypostasis*" (*qnumo*) (...) Thus I saw all the Christian communities, with their different Christological positions, as possessing a single common ground that is without any difference. Accordingly, I totally eradicated any hatred from the depths of my heart, and I completely renounced disputing with anyone over confessional matters.[33]

*Modern Texts of the Syrian Orthodox Tradition*

1. Patriarch Ignatius Zaka I Iwas (d. 2014), "The doctrine of the union of the two natures in Christ":

After the union we do not speak of the man and of God, nor of God and of man, but of the man-God or the God-man.[34]

[31] The title is that of the bishop who holds the second rank after the Patriarch.

[32] PO 31.1. A study of the Christology of Bar Ebroyo is provided by M. J. Panicker, *The Person of Christ in the Writings of Juhanon Gregorius Abu'l Faraj commonly called Bar Ebraya*, Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte 4 (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2002).

[33] A. J. Wensinck, *Bar Hebraeus's Book of the Dove* (Leiden: Brill, 1919), 60 (translation slightly adapted by the author).

[34] GOTR 10/2 (1964-1965): 151-3, at 152.

From our discussions so far, I come to feel that there are no insoluble problems of doctrine between us concerning the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. We (Oriental Orthodox) affirm that our Lord Jesus Christ is perfect God and perfect man, and that He is one Person and one nature. You (Eastern Orthodox) also maintain the same faith by affirming that he is "in two natures" Whereas we emphasize the union of natures, you insist on their distinctness".[35]

2. Father V. C. Samuel (d. 1998), "The manhood of Jesus Christ in the tradition of the Syrian Orthodox Church":

The two-natures formula of the Syrian Church confesses that Jesus Christ is "from two natures". The "one incarnate nature of God the Word" is composed of two natures, which continue in Him, each in its own absolute integrity and perfection in a condition of union, without being mixed or confused one with the other. The natures are so indissolubly united that neither of them can be viewed in separation from the other. Thus Jesus Christ is at once consubstantial with God the Father as to Godhead and consubstantial with us as to manhood. Taking these affirmations seriously, one is entitled to say that, for the Syrian Church, though Christ does not exist "in two natures", the two natures exist in Him, each in its own perfection and reality.[36]

3. Paulos Mar Gregorios, Metropolitan of Delhi (d. 1996), "The Christological consensus reached in Vienna":

We know now that those who use the terminology of one nature want to give centrality to the fact of union. What is united is one. We know also that those who speak of two natures do not thereby seek to deny the unity of the person or the union of the natures. They are simply afraid that to speak of one nature may mean affirming *only* (*monos*) one of the two natures that were united. We know now that those who speak of One nature do not thereby deny the full and perfect humanity of Christ. We now know also that those who speak of two natures do not thereby mean that the humanity and divinity can exist separately or function one without the other.[37]

"The Christological consensus (...)":

If there has to be a short formula, we should create one that is faithful to Cyril and to the substance of Chalcedon—like e.g. "The One united divine-human nature of God's Logos Incarnate".[38]

*Ecumenical Dialogue: Agreed statements on Christology*

The first series of theological dialogue involving the Syrian Orthodox and other Oriental Orthodox Churches were with the Eastern Orthodox Churches (Greek, Russian and others). These began with four non-official meetings held in Aarhus (1964), Bristol (1967), Geneva (1970) and Addis Ababa (1971).

Agreed Statement, Orthodox/Oriental Orthodox Dialogue (1967):

Ever since the fifth century, we have used different formulae to confess our common faith in the One Lord Jesus Christ, perfect God and perfect Man. Some of us affirm two natures, wills and energies hypostatically united in the One Lord Jesus Christ. Some of us affirm one united

[35] In GOTR 16/1-2 (1971): 75.

[36] In GOTR 13 (1968): 152-64, at 152.

[37] In *Pro Oriente Five Vienna Consultations* (Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1993), 177-83, at 178; [=3rd Consultation, 1976].

[38] Ibid. 181.

> divine-human nature, will and energy in the same Christ. But both sides speak of a union without confusion, without change, without division, without separation. The four adverbs [of the Chalcedonian formula of faith] belong to our common tradition (...) Those who speak in terms of "two" do not thereby divide or separate. Those who speak in terms of 'one' do not thereby commingle or confuse.[39]

*The Syrian Orthodox Church accepts this Statement.*

Once again, dialogue between the Syrian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches started off on a non-official level, organised by the Pro Oriente Foundation (Vienna). At an early stage what came to be known as the "Vienna Christological formula" was produced.

The "Vienna Christological Formula" (1971):

> We believe that our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is God the Son incarnate; perfect in His divinity and perfect in His humanity. His divinity was not separated from His humanity for a single moment, not for the twinkling of an eye; His humanity is one with His divinity without commixture, without confusion, without division, without separation (…)
>
> We see that there are still differences in the theological interpretation of the mystery of Christ, because of our different ecclesiastical and theological traditions (…)[40]

Agreed Statement, Pro Oriente: Second Catholic/Oriental Orthodox non-official Consultation, 1973:

> We understand that when our common father in Christ, St. Cyril of Alexandria, speaks of the one incarnate Nature of God's Word, he does not deny, but expresses the full and perfect Humanity of Christ. We believe also that the Definition of the Council of Chalcedon, rightly understood today, affirms the unity of person and the indissoluble union of Divinity and Humanity in Christ, despite the phrase 'in two natures'.[41]

Common Declaration of Faith, Patriarch Ignatius Zaka I Iwas and Pope John Paul II (June, 1984):

> We confess that our Lord and our God, our Saviour and the King of all, Jesus Christ, is perfect God as to His divinity and perfect man as to His humanity. In Him His divinity is united to His humanity. This union is real, perfect, without blending or mingling, without confusion, without alteration, without division, without the least separation. He who is God eternal and indivisible, became visible in the flesh and took the form of a servant. In Him are united, in a real, perfect, divisible and inseparable way, divinity and humanity, and in Him all their properties are present and active.[42]

Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church (2014)

Furthermore, in his own statement of faith as the Patriarch-elect of the Syrian Orthodox Church, Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, proclaimed the oneness of faith with the fellow patriarchs of the sister Oriental Orthodox Churches, and stated his acceptance of the general statements of faith produced as a result of

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[39] Reproduced in *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. Christine Chaillot (Geneva: Inter-Orthodox Dialogue, 1998), 49.

[40] *Five Vienna Consultations* (Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1993), 88; (also in S. P. Brock, "The Syriac Churches in ecumenical dialogue on Christology," in *Eastern Christianity: Studies in Modern History, Religion and Politics*, ed. A. O'Mahony (London: Melisende, 2004), 44-65, at 50).

[41] *Five Vienna Consultations*, 171; also quoted by Mar Gregorios Yuhanna Ibrahim, *Syriac Dialogue* 2; (Vienna: Pro Oriente, 1996), 52.

[42] Quoted in Brock, "The Syriac Churches in ecumenical dialogue," 51-2.

the theological dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. In addition, he consented to the agreements made between the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church on one hand and with the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch on the other as stated below:

> I also proclaim the oneness of faith with my partners in the Apostolic ministry, the shepherds of the sister Oriental Orthodox Churches. I accept the general statements of faith produced by the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, in particular the statements produced at Chambésy in 1990 and 1993. I consent to the agreement that took place between my two immediate predecessors and the Heads of the Church of Rome in 1971 and 1984, as well as the agreement with the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch in 1991.[43]

[43] *The Order for the Installation of the Patriarch: used by the Fathers of the Holy Synod in the Installation of Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East* (Maaret Saydnaya: St. Ephrem Monastery, 2014), 5.

# The Armenian Christological Tradition

*Archimandrite Shahe Ananyan*

The birth of Christology, as a theological domain in the Armenian Church is hard to define, both from the historical and the doctrinal points of view. First of all, one has to agree that the insufficiency/uncertainty of the main historical-theological official documents on the Christology, i.e. the collection of Armenian Church Councils' faith definitions (ὅροϛ), was covered by Christological responses and reflections of different theologians and theological schools. In this respect, it becomes difficult to discern the official conciliar responses from the official but non conciliar reactions during the great Christological debates and apologies in the history of the Armenian Church. Secondly, the translational-hermeneutical character of the Armenian Christian tradition, especially regarding the works of the Church Fathers, was extremely rich in creating and refining the Greek or Syriac Christological/Theological terms into the Armenian language. And finally, the preponderant spirit of Apology in the Armenian Christological writings leaves little place for the theoretical and speculative reflections which could perhaps lead into some general trajectories for the clarification of special Christological terms and expressions.

Nevertheless, within the framework of the historical development of the Armenian Christology there remain some important moments and details having a purely Armenian peculiar character which could largely contribute to the modern overview of some principal Christological notions. Yet, it does not mean that the medieval Armenian theologians did not formulate and interpret the Christological doctrine in the Armenian tradition. The problem is the relationship between the historical development of Christological doctrine and its extra conception *vis-à-vis* the Byzantine and Syriac theological traditions, the direct Christian neighbours of the Armenians. That is the reason why we are dealing, within the framework of this study, with some important facts of the history of the Armenian Church's Christology, observing them also in the light of principal theological-Christological conceptions and terms. It is not our goal here to present the detailed historical development of Christology but rather the emergence and formation of the Armenian Christological doctrine as a *theological phenomenon*, composed of some theological-philosophical notions and historical facts.

## *1. Some Important Terms in the Armenian Christology*

In the earlier stage of the Armenian Christology the character of the union of Christ's natures is undoubtedly an important factor on the way to understanding correctly the theological language and terms as used in the Armenian Christological formulas and reflections. Hereafter we will discuss the two most important models of union proposed by the earlier Armenian theologians, on the basis of Early Christian patristic tradition.

The first and perhaps the most significant term is xarnoumn (խառնումն, *cf. also xarnouac'* (խառնուած), *xarnouac'ō* (խառնուածոյ) which corresponds to the different Greek terms, deriving from *kerannymi* (κεράννυμι) and *mignymi* (μίγνυμι).[1] The terms designate the close relationship of natures, the intimate participation of God in human reality, the human engagement in the divine life.[2] In English the terms could be translated as "mixture [without confusion]" or "intermingling". The Armenian *xarnoumn* and derived verbs and verbal constructions emerged in the field of theological terminology via the *Didascalia* (Teaching) of St. Gregory the Illuminator, the patron Saint and the first official head of the Armenian Church.[3] But the term was already utilized by the Cappadocian Fathers and by St. Cyril himself.[4] It is necessary also to mention that the Cappadocian Fathers, speaking about the mixture and blending, departed from the etymological context of the word "nature" (φύσις). Hence, the natures commixed (κίρνημι) and intermingle (περιχωρέω) as from their co-growing or mutual coalescing (συμφυΐα or συμφυεῖα).[5]

In the Armenian Christological tradition the "mixture of natures [without confusion]" became the dominant theological vision. As mentioned above, the "commixture of natures" appeared in one of the first Armenian theological works, "The Teaching of St. Gregory the Illuminator". In numerous passages of this work one can notice the dominant presence of the theory of commixture:

> He humbled himself and joined[6] His divinity to our humanity and the immortal to the mortal to link all mankind to the immortality of His own divinity.[7]
>
> For He was united to the flesh by nature and joined[8] the flesh to His divinity.[9]

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[1] Shahe Ananyan, "Apologie et Christologie; La doctrine du Christ de l'Eglise arménienne aux V^e^-XII^ème^ siècles," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 62, 2 (2013): 234.

[2] Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius: deux débats théologiques après le triomphe de l'Orthodoxie*, CSCO 609, Subsidia 17, 111.

[3] The work we are referring to is originally the II Book of "The History of Armenia of Agathangelus", cf. *Agatʻangełay patmoutʻiun hayoć* (History of Armenia of Agathangelus), Tpx'is (Tiflis), 1909, for the English translation cf. R. W. Thomson, *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, revised edition, Avant: Treasures of the Armenian Christian Tradition (New York, 2001). Saint Gregory the Illuminator (257-331) brought Christianity into Armenia and after a certain period of instruction baptized the Armenian King Tiridates III along with members of the royal court and upper class as Christians.

[4] For the necessary patristic references see Gregorius Nazianzenus, "Discourse 2," §23, in *Sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni Opera: Orationes II, XII, IX*, 1994, 25-26, I, 4-6; Grégoire de Naziance, "Discours 38:13," in *Sources Chrétiennes 358*, intr., texte critique et notes par *Claudio Moreschini*, trad. par *Paul Gallay* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1990); Brian E. Daley, S.J., *Gregory of Nazianzus (Orations, Poems, Letters)* (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 123; Grégoire de Nysse, *Discours catéchétique* XXVII 1, texte grec, traductions française, intr. et index par Louis Méridier (Paris, 1908), 126; Gregory of Nyssa, *Dogmatic Treatises*, Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892), 154; Cyrillus Alexandrinus, "Contra Nestorium," I, §3,3, in *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* I,I,6,22, 1.7-12.

[5] Cf. Gregorius Nazianzenus, "Epistula 101," PG 37, 181C. Cf. also Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 114.

[6] The verb in Armenian is *xarneac'*, therefore it would be more correct to translate it by "commixed".

[7] *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, §385, 111. Cf. *Agatʻangełay patmoutʻiun hayoć* (History of Armenia of Agathangelus), 182-183.

And perhaps it would not appear surprising to see how this theological vision of St. Gregory the Illuminator *canonized* the use of "commixture". In the official collection of ecclesiastical epistles of the Armenian Church, Book of Letters (Arm. *Girk' T'łt'oc'*) we have at least one piece of evidence of the use of St. Gregory the Illuminator's above-mentioned citation, in the letter of the Armenian King Gagik (1042-1045), addressed to the Byzantine Emperor Romanos Lekapenos (920-944).[10] The Armenian King, referring to the indisputable authority of Saint Gregory the Illuminator both for Armenians and Byzantines, cites the same 369 and 385 paragraphs from the "Teaching of Saint Gregory the Illuminator".[11] It is indeed the direct indication of the theological importance of the "Teaching". In the further centuries the passages from the "Teaching" were inserted in some other important Armenian theological anthologies (florilegia).[12] Yet, for the Armenian medieval authors the distinction between fusion and commixture was equally important. Thus for Catholicos Kiwrion of Georgia (598-609?), also known in the Armenian medieval literature as a zealous Chalcedonian, the distinction between *fusion* (Arm. verb *xarnakel*) and *commixture* (Arm. verb *xarnel*) was the main matter of dispute in his response to the Armenian Catholicos Abraham I Ałbatànec'i (607-615).[13] In their explanations Armenians employed the complementary expressions such as "veritable union" (ճշմարիտ միութիւն-*jšmarit mioutiunn*) and "union without confusion" (անշփոթ միութիւն-*anšpot' miout'iunn*).[14]

Before discussing the significance of the second model of union ("to put on flesh (humanity), Arm. "զգենուլ մարմին-*zgenoul marmin*") one has necessarily to take into consideration some important Syriac peculiarities of the above-discussed model as well. The Syriac medieval authors had surely the adequate terms for *mixis*, *krasis* and deriving words at their disposal.[15]

For the Armenian Christian tradition in the 4th-5th centuries, according to the various sources, the Syriac Christianity and culture were the dominant factors.[16] Obviously it would be the same for the early Christological formulas.[17]

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[8] In Armenian *xarneac'*, "commixed".

[9] *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, § 369, 105. For further discussion on the theology of Incarnation in the Teaching of St. Gregory see The *Teaching of Saint Gregory*, 26-32.

[10] Cf. Book of Letters [henceforth BL], Jerusalem 1994, 540-549.

[11] Cf. BL, 543. See also BL, 533.

[12] Cf. Vardan Ajgekc'i, *Ar'mat havatō* (*The Roots of Faith*) (Yerevan 1998), 186-187, 376-377; *Knik' havatō* (*Seal of Faith*), ed. Bishop Karapet Ter'-Mkr'tchian (St. Etchmiadzin 1914), 146; Anania Naregac'i, *Havatar'mat* (*The Roots of Faith*), coll. *Armenian Classical Authors*, vol. X (Antellias, Lebanon, 2009), 543.

[13] BL, 353.

[14] Cf. BL, 252, 532 etc.

[15] I. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon: Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Norwich: Canterbury Press 1988), 249.

[16] For the further discussion on the Syriac background of early Armenian theology see L. Ter-Petrossian, "The Syriac sources of the Teaching of Saint Gregory the Illuminator," in *Banber Matenadarni* 15 (1986): 95-109 (in Arm.).

The Teaching of St. Gregory contains several citations and allusions from the Syriac works such as "Commentary on the Book of Genesis", attributed to St. Ephrem the Syrian,[18] "Commentary on the Diatessaron" of St. Ephrem the Syrian[19], Homilies of Aphrahat the Persian,[20] "Pastoral letter" of Aitallah, Bishop of Edessa,[21] etc. It is also to be noted that all these works were translated into Armenian in the earlier stage of the Armenian Christological tradition.[22] Hence, the presence of early Syriac Christological terms and expressions in Armenian Christological language should not be surprising.

We will discuss, in the following lines, the significance of the second important model of union, "to put on flesh (humanity)-Arm. "*zgenoul marmin*". It is to be mentioned that the expression was used by the first Syriac theologians, thus having become the most peculiar example for the representation of the Incarnation. Aphrahat the Persian and St. Ephrem the Syrian were abundantly recurring to the image of vestment.[23] For them this was the preferred expression to translate the Nicene *esarkōtē* (ἐσαρκώθη, litt. "became flesh").[24] That is, the image of vestment or "the clothing metaphor" as called by S. Brock,[25] expressed adequately the Nicene orthodox definition of the union of Divinity and humanity.

The earliest evidence of the use of the "clothing metaphor" as a mean of Christological reflection in the Armenian tradition, could be found in the "Teaching of St. Gregory the Illuminator" and in the "Stromateis" (Arm. Յաճախապատում-*Hajakhapatoum*), a fifth-century collection of theological treatises, attributed also to St. Gregory the Illuminator.[26] Here are some passages from the noted works:

> Son of God became son of man and put on our nature (…) and the Son of God was incarnated (…)[27]

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[17] Cf. Gabriele Winkler, *Über die Entwicklungsgeschichte des armenischen Symbolums*: *Ein Vergleich mit dem syrischen und griechischen Formelgut unter Einbezug der relevanten georgischen und athiopischen Quellen*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta, Vol. 262 (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute. 2000), 418-419.

[18] Ter-Petrossian, "The Syriac sources of the Teaching of Saint Gregory the Illuminator," 97-101.

[19] Idem, 103.

[20] Idem, 101.

[21] Idem, 102.

[22] Idem, 96.

[23] *Aphrahatis Demonstrationes*, Dem. XXI, 9; XXII 4 (Patrologia Syriaca t. 1, Paris, 1894); *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers*, *Sermo de Domino Nostro*, XLVI, X, Hg. von E. Beck, CSCO 270; cf. N. Seleznyov, *The Christology of the Assyrian Church of the East: The Main Documents and Development of the Doctrine* (Moscow: Euroasiatica, 2002), 38-39 (in Russian).

[24] Sebastian Brock, *L'œil de lumière: la vision spirituelle de Saint Ephrem*, traduit de l'anglais et du syriaque par Didier Rance, Préface de Dom Louis Leloir, Spirituarité Orientale, Nr. 50 (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, France: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1991), 42-43, 108-109.

[25] "Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition," in *Studies in Syriac Christianity: History, Literature and Theology* (Hampshire: Variorum, 1992), 11-38.

[26] "Stromateis or Theological Treatises of Saint Gregory the Illuminator," coll. *Armenian Classical Authors*, vol. I (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2003), 7-137.

[27] Ibid., 16.

> But when He wished, He took human form and put on flesh and descended to our likeness. For our salvation came and put on humanity especially for the renewal of all creatures.[28]

The same Incarnational vision was shared by the two earliest Armenian translations of patristic works, "The Pastoral Letter of Aitallah, Bishop of Edessa"[29] and "The Catechesis" of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.[30] Moreover, in the "Confession of Faith" addressed to the Persian King Yazdgird II (438-457) the Armenian Bishops accentuated the expression "to put on flesh" as a main Mystery of Christian faith.[31] It is understandable that the expression, so widely recurrent, would not have been limited only in the "theological dictionary" of early Armenian Christianity. For the Armenian medieval authors and theologians it became also one of the most used expressions in the Christological debates and treatises. One could find it in the official theological documents and treatises through all subsequent centuries.[32]

To resume what has been said above on the significance of the two Christological notions, as a means of expressing the union of Divine and human natures, we may make now some remarks.

a. The Armenian terms *xarnel-commixture* and *zgenoul mařmin-to put on flesh*, expressing the mode of the union of Divine and human natures in Christ were construed on the doctrinal background of the Patristic tradition of the early Church. In this respect, the two terms formed the appropriate grounds for the further development of the Armenian Christological tradition, having defined thus the theological ways for almost all apologetical and dogmatic treatises up to the end of the 18th century.
b. If on the one hand by the term "*xarnel-commixture*" the Armenian theologians insisted on the significance of *theosis* (partaking of Divinity) as an imitational way of salvation,[33] by the term "*zgenoul mařmin-to put on flesh*" they, on the other hand, focused their attention on the real and indissoluble character of union, stressing meanwhile the absolute necessity of the presence of two natures for the union. One could deduce that the first term implies the importance of the Salvation's mystery, and the second one, the mean

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[28] *The Teaching of Saint Gregory*, §§ 377 (108), 663 (213).

[29] "Epistola ad christianos in Persarum regione," Typis S. Lazari in Insula (1942), 46, 50-51.

[30] "*Kočumn yńayut'ean* (Cathechesis) XI, 3" (Constantinople 1727), 173.

[31] "*History of Vardan and the Armenian War*", coll. *Armenian Classical Authors*, vol. I, 563.

[32] Cf. BL, 212, 253 etc.

[33] For this consideration it is useful to mention here a very specific expression that the Armenian theologians used to prescribe to the body of Christ, "*աստուածացեալ մարմինն-astouacaćeal mařminn-deified body*" (BL, 382). The expression itself explains the importance of *theosis* (Arm. աստուածացում-*astouacac'oum*), having been realized by the mean of commixture. In another passage of BL (the Letter of Step'annos Syunec'i (Stephen, bishop of Syunik') addressed to the Byzantine Patriarch Germanous) the *theosis* as a necessary result of the Economy of Incarnation, was accentuated by the citation from the 4th Treatise of St. Athanasius against the Arians: "For, if the works of the Word of God was not realized by the mean of body, the man then would not be deified" (BL, 441).

of that mystery, the gracious and wonderful union of the two natures.

c. The two above-discussed models of union were inherited from the Early Christian patristic tradition. Even if some modern theologians consider allegedly that after the Council of Chalcedon the term "*xarnel*" was moved away from the theological language of the Church,[34] its significance was, however, decisive for the Armenian Christology, as a theological vision closely relying on the patristic tradition. Moreover, the Armenians themselves were fully aware of their Eutychian and Nestorian misuses as attested in the various documents of the Armenian Church.[35]

We come now to another important theme in the Armenian Christology, i.e. the role and significance of "nature" (*physis*) and "person" (*hypostasis/prosopon*) as used in the Armenian theological tradition. We will try to only indicate, without the possibility of analytic elaboration, some essential and major points in the theological (Christological) implication of these words.

First of all, one has to consider the etymological character of "nature" (Arm. *bnout'iwn*) in Armenian. It derives from the ancient Iranian *bwn* (base, foundation, origin), and has the signification of "trunk" in classical and modern Armenian.[36] Moreover, *hamaboun* in classical Armenian signifies "consubstantial". This kind of perception of "nature" (*physis*) in its semantic implication accentuated the relational character of the word. In Armenian theological language "the word "nature" (*bnout'iwn*) was thus conceived systematically as "origin" or "root".[37]

The Greek terms "*hypostasis*" and "*prosopon*" in the classical Armenian concern directly the Trinitarian and Christological doctrines. In the earlier stage of the Armenian theological tradition the "*hypostasis*" was rendered by "*zoroutʿiun*", meaning "power" and closer to the Greek *energeia* (ἐνέργεια).[38] The "*zoroutʿiun*" was later replaced by "*andzn*" and "*arandznavoroutʿiun*", translating exactly the Greek "*hypostasis*". The Greek "*prosopon*", in the cases where the meaning of "person" is intended, had been translated by "*eres*" or "*dēm*" (face, appearance) both in the earlier (5th-6th cc.) and later stages of the Armenian Christological tradition.[39]

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[34] Cf. B. Talatinian, *Il monofisismo nella Chiesa Armena: Storia et dottrina*, coll. *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum*, Analecta 14 (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1979), 63; P. Tekeyan, *Controverses christologiques en Arméno-Cilicie dans la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle (1165-1198)*, coll. *Orientalia Christiana Analecta 124* (Rome: 1939), 86. For the detailed analysis see Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 125-129.

[35] Cf. BL, 532, 155, 158.

[36] H. Ačaryan, *Hajerēn armatakan baŕaran* (*Armenian Etymological Dictionary*), vol. I (Yerevan 1971), 483-484.

[37] Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 109.

[38] "The Teaching of Saint Gregory," 263 (65), 273 (70).

[39] Cf. R. W. Thomson, "Some Philosophical Terms in the *Teaching* of Gregory", *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes* I (1964): 41-46. For the further discussion see Henning J. Lehmann, *Per Piscatores: Studies in the Armenian Version of a collection of Homilies by Eusebius of Emesa and Severian of Gabala* (Århus 1975), 122-140; Robert E. Winn, *Eusebius of Emesa: Church and Theology in the Mid-Fourth*

*2. The Rejection of the Chalcedonian Definition and the Historical Development of Armenian Christology in the VII-XII cc.*

In order to understand what has been discussed above, for the contemporary reading some historical remarks and details will be needed. In this case the historical significance of the doctrine of Christ in the Armenian tradition implies the necessary periodisation, i. e. the discernment of the main historical moments or events which were decisive on the way towards Armenian Christology's "crystallization". Hence, from the historical perspective we should first of all proceed by separating two main periods: a. *pre-Chalcedonian* and *b. post-Chalcedonian*. This division is due also to the documentary evidence on the formation and development of Armenian Christology.[40] The documents for the pre-Chalcedonian period were mainly preserved in the Book of Letters, representing the formation period of the Armenian Christology. There remain also some theological treatises from the same period (not included in the Book of Letters) which we have discussed above.[41] The group of documents, representing the pre-Chalcedonian period of Armenian Christology, stretched between 431/432 and 451/452. As noted above, that earliest stage of formation or rather the doctrinal background of Armenian Christology had its roots in the theological heritage of Alexandria (St. Cyril) and Cappadocia (the Cappadocian Fathers),[42] comprising meanwhile some important Christological terms and expressions from the Syriac speaking patristic tradition.

Yet for the post-Chalcedonian period it is important not to lose sight of the "gradual" character of rejection of the council of Chalcedon.[43] The first attested explicit official-conciliar decision against Chalcedon appeared at the Second Council of Duin in 555, during the Catholicate of Nerses II Bagrevandatc'i (548-557).[44] In all the previous official letters and documents (491-554) there is not any explicit rejection of Chalcedon and the *Tome* of Leo, but rather the confirmation of the Armenian position against Nestorius and his teachings. It is true especially for the second letter of the Catholicos Babgen I (507/508)[45] where the birth of Nestorius' heresy was closely associated with the Council of Chalcedon,[46] yet without any allusion to the anathematization or rejection of the Council of Chalcedon. On the other side at the same Council of

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*Century* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 257-262; Talatinian, *Il monofisismo nella Chiesa Armena*, 82-86.

[40] Ananyan, "Apologie et Christologie," 230-231.

[41] Cf. also Karekin Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (Toronto 2006), 163-183.

[42] Cf. Idem, 146.

[43] Ananyan, "Apologie et Christologie," 230; N. Garsoïan, "L'Arménie," in *Histoire du Christianisme*, vol. 3 (Paris: Desclée, 1998), 1141-1146.

[44] BL, 177-178. It confirmed the rejection of the teachings of Nestorius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Council of Chalcedon, the Tome of Leo, Eutyches and Severus of Antioch.

[45] BL, 157-162. Cf. N. Garsoïan, *L'Eglise arménienne et le Grand Schisme d'Orient*, CSCO 574, 162.

[46] Garsoïan, *L'Eglise arménienne*, 446-450.

Duin (506) the adherence to the *Henotikon* became official.[47] It was perhaps one of the main reasons why the Armenian authors maintained the "position of absolute silence" on the issue of Chalcedon in the 5th, and even at the beginning of the 6th centuries.

After the condemnation of Chalcedon at the council of Duin in 555, the rejection of the Chalcedonian *formula fidei* proved to be the official attitude of the Armenian Church. The new ecclesial and theological transformations appeared in the bosom of the Transcaucasian churches. The division of the Armenian and Georgian churches (c.a. 605) under the pretext of the Council of Chalcedon caused the new and even more rigid attitudes against the council of Chalcedon. In his letter to the Georgian Catholicos Kiwrion (595-610), the Armenian *locum tenens* Vrtànes Kertòł (604-607) accused him of having received as orthodox the *Tome* of Leo and the Council of Chalcedon.[48] Moreover, the newly elected Armenian Catholicos Abraham I (607-611) convened a new Synod in Duin in 607 during which, with the election of a new Catholicos, six new canons against the Council of Chalcedon were inserted in the agenda of the same Synod.[49] In 608-609, after a certain period of discussions and correspondences with Kiwrion, Abraham I edited the official Encyclical, having excommunicated the Georgian Catholicos as adherent of the Council of Chalcedon and having described Chalcedon as "turning away from truth".[50]

The final condemnation and rejection of the Council of Chalcedon by the Catholicos Abraham I was indeed the last point of what we called the "gradual" condemnation of Chalcedon in the Armenian Church. For the centuries to come the Armenian official position vis-à-vis the Council of Chalcedon remained without any changes or modifications. Nevertheless, the emergence of Monothelitism (Monoenergism) and the new context of Armeno-Syrian relations added some nuances and reformulations to the Christological position of the Armenian Church in the 7th-8th centuries. The union between the Armenian Catholicos Ezr (630-641) and the Emperor Heraclius (610-641) at the Synod of Theodosiopolis (Arm. *Karin*) in 631-633 was based on the Monoenergist formula.[51] According to the Armenian historian Sebeos (VII c.), the official document signed by Heraclius himself and sent to the Catholicos Ezr, was "anathematizing Nestorius and all heretics; but it did not anathematize the Council of Chalcedon".[52] The successor of Ezr, Nerses III the Builder (641-661)

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[47] Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, *The Christology of the Armenian Orthodox Church* (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 2004), 8. In the BL, the *Henotikon* stands with the Twelve Anathemas of St. Cyril of Alexandria (159).

[48] BL, 280. For the English translation of the documents concerning Armeno-Georgian Church schism see Archbishop Gorun Papian, *The Relations between the Armenian and Georgian Churches according to the Armenian Sources (300-610)*, (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2001), 253-387.

[49] BL, 292-295.

[50] BL, 361.

[51] "The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos", translated, with notes, by R. W. Thomson, historical commentary by James Howard-Johnston, assistance from Tim Greenwood: PART I. Translation and Notes, coll. Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 31 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press 1998), 91.

[52] *Ad. loc.*

retained the union until the Synod of Duin in 648-649 rejected it. However, the issue of Armeno-Byzantine union was revitalized once more by the arrival of the Emperor Constans (641-668) to Duin in 654. The Catholicos Nerses III shared the Eucharistic communion with the Emperor and again complied with Chalcedon.[53] The union initiated by Heraclius on the basis of the Monoenergist formula finally was abandoned when Arab troops conquered Armenia and reversed the political situation in the region.[54]

The Monoenergist discussions gave birth to the different anti-Monothelite and pro-Monothelite groups and schools in Armenia whose activities and positions were indeed beyond the traditional Christological position of the Armenian Church. There are two important records on the Christological situation in Armenia, closely related to the famous Synod of Theodosiopolis: the letter (632-633) of the Armenian *vardapet* (doctor) Matʻusała (Methuselah) to the Emperor Heraclius[55] and the theological treatise of the nephew of Catholicos Ezr on his mother's side, T'ēodoros K'rt'enawor (d. c. 680) against the disciples of the seventh-century Armenian controversial theologian, Yovhannēs Mayragomec'i, adherents to the extreme branch of Julianism.[56] In these two documents were explained some objections with respect to the union of Theodosiopolis[57] and the extreme expressions of some docetic conceptions concerning the body and humane nature of Christ were totally rejected.

Two other eminent Armenian Church leaders enclosed the process of crystallization and definite formation of the Armenian Christology in the 7th-8th centuries. Their theological activities were marked with the apologies and debates against the extreme Julianists, the Armenian aphtartodocetaes[58], the iconoclasts and the sect of the Paulicians.[59] The Armenian Catholicos St. Yovhan

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[53] See "The Armenian History attributed to Sebeos", 113-132.

[54] For further discussions see Cyril Hovorun, *Will, Action and Freedom: Christological Controversies in the Seventh Century* (Leiden-Boston: Brill 2008), 65-66.

[55] "T'ułt' Matʻusałayi Siwneac' episkoposi ar tʻagaworn Herakl Vasn havatō (Letter of Methuselah, Bishop of Syunik, "On Faith", to the Emperor Heraclius)", coll. Armenian Classical Authors, vol. IV (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia 2005), 419-423.

[56] "Yovhannou Imastasēri Odznec'wō Matenagroutʻiwnk'-Domini Johannis Ozniensis Opera" (St. Lazarus-Venice 1833), 147-158. The figure of Mayragomec'i was very controversial and ambiguous in the Christological debates of medieval Armenia. Mayragomec'i did not accept the pact of union at Theodosiopolis and was exiled by Ezr. In some of the dogmatic collections he was exalted as a great theologian and hermit. However, thanks to his disciples, his name became associated with the docetic sect. Cf. P. Cowe, "Armenian Christology in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries with Particular Reference of Catholicos Yovhan Ojnec'i and Xosrovik T'argmanič," *Journal of Theological Studies 55* (2004): 42-43.

[57] Cf. note 56.

[58] The word "aphtartodocetae" is composed of *aphtartos* (Gr. ἄφθαρτος, imperishable, incorruptible) and *dokeō* (Gr. δοκέω, to seem). The aphtartodocetaes represent the extreme brench of the non-Chalcedonian movement, called also *Phantasiastae*, because they appeared to acknowledge only a seeming body of Christ and to border on *Docetism*. Aphtartodocetae appeared in Armenia at the beginning of the 7th century and were still influential at the end of the 8th century (cf. "The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church", Oxford: Oxford University Press 2005, 83).

[59] The Paulicians flourished between 650 and 872 in Armenia and the Eastern regions of the Byzantine Empire. According to medieval Byzantine sources, the name "Paulician" was derived from the 3rd century Bishop of Antioch, Paul of Samosata. The religious system of the Paulicians was

Odznec'i (717-728) with his collaborator Xosrovik T'argmanič and St. Step'anos Siwnec'i (Stephen, Bishop of Siwnik', c. 685-735)[60] played the decisive role in the formation of Armenian Christology, having opened equally the door to the further dialogues both with Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Churches. The works of all these theologians focused on the Orthodox interpretation of the doctrine of Incorruptibility which subsequently applied also some details of liturgical polemics for the defense of Armenian traditional azymes practice during the Holy Liturgy.[61] Finally the Synod of Manazkert in 726, initiated by the Catholicos St. Yovhan Odznec'i and Syrian patriarch Athanasius (724-740), solemnly proclaimed the doctrinal union of the Armenian and Syriac Churches which hitherto had exhibited constant contradictions regarding the doctrine of Incorruptibility. Although the main issue of the Synod was the union of Armenian and Syriac churches, according to different historical records one could presume that the assembled bishops tried also to resolve the theological problems raised by the pro-Monothelite parties.[62] In the ten canons, established by the Fathers of Synod, a full half must have been interdictions against the different docetic fractions, issued from the disciples of Mayragomec'i: canons sixth and ninth target possibly the Severian positions, and finally fourth and fifth are the sanctions against those dividing the union.[63] Hence, the long period of discussions and debates on the Severian-Julianist controversy was ended for the Armenians and Syrians at the Synod of Manazkert (726). The admitted consensus obviously redirected both Armenian and Syrian Christologies to the common and mutually shared *formula fidei*. It is on the basis of the latter that the Armenians continued their own dialogue with the Byzantines over the following centuries.

In the 8th-12th centuries the Armenian Church entered into a more intense and decisive period of relationships with the Byzantine Orthodox Church.[64] This new *dialogue inachevé* started by the Letter of Germanos, Patriarch of Constantinople (c.655-c.740/750), was brought to Armenia by Stephen of Siwnik'. The Letter of Germanos (preserved only in Armenian) and the response of Stephen of Siwnik' were indeed the most significant sources on the newly

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mainly dualistic, although some argued that it contained also some elements of adoptionist doctrine (cf. Nina G. Garsoian, *The Paulician Heresy. A Study in the Origin and Development of Paulicianism in Armenia and the Eastern Provinces of the Byzantine Empire*. Publications in Near and Middle East Studies. Columbia University, Series A 6. (Mouton: The Hague, 1967).

[60] Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev, "Travels and Studies of Stephen of Siwnik' (c.685-735): Redefining Armenian Orthodoxy under Islamic Rule," in *Heresy and the Making of European Culture: Medieval and Modern Perspectives*, ed. Andrew P. Roach and James R. Simpson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 355-381.

[61] Fr. Mesŕop Aramean, "Hay Ekełec'ou k'ŕistosabanakan mtk'i owŕvagceŕ (4th-8th cc.) (Overview of the Christology of Armenian Church (4th-8th cc.)), *Gandzasaŕ II* (Eŕevan, 1992), 108-121.

[62] Erwand Ter-Minassiantz, *Armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu der Syrischen Kirche bis zum Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts: nach den armenischen und syrischen Quellen* (Leipzig 1904), 72. Cf. contra S. P. Cowe, "Philoxenus of Mabbug and the Synod of Manazkert," *ARAM 5* (1993): 121.

[63] "Tearn Mixajeli patr'iar'k'i Asorvoc' Jamanakagr'owtiwn-The Chronicle of the Syrian Patriarch Michael)" (Jerusalem 1871), 338-340; Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, t. II 3 (fr. tr. by J. P. Chabot) (Paris, 1904), 457-461, 492-500.

[64] Cf. BL, 435-616.

initiated theological dialogue in the 8th century. It is important also to mention that beside the Christological issues the response of Stephen opened a new liturgical topic in the history of the Armeno-Byzantine quarrel, i.e. the Armenian liturgical tradition of pure wine of chalice and its rejection by the Quinisexte Council of Trullo in 692.[65] Over the following centuries the Armenian liturgical peculiarities, i.e. the use of azymes and pure cup during Divine Liturgy were discussed as closely connected with the Christological position of the Armenian Church. The "liturgical argument" for the Christological explorations soon became almost the most applied counter-argument for the Armenian theologians so as to defend the doctrine of incorruptibility. The Christological transformation of the noted "liturgical argument" was insistently approved in the theological reflections of the 9th-10th centuries authors. To mention briefly some examples, we will refer to the works of Sahak Vardapet (called also Mrut', IX c.) and Anania Naregac'i (X c.). In these two theological treatises the importance of the liturgical issues for the Orthodox interpretation of the doctrine of Christ in the Armenian tradition is repeatedly accentuated.[66] According to the theology of Sahak Vardapet and Anania Naregac'i the body of Christ (in the context of its Eucharistic signification) results from the unconfused union, for it is only by the mean of that body that we can have communion with God. If one considers two divided natures in Christ, then the communion with God, according to Anania, will be impossible and will be deprived of its divino-human character.

In the following centuries the theological quarrels and debates between Armenians and Byzantines, regardless of their apologetical and polemical expressions, contributed largely to the creation of an atmosphere where both sides sought to continue a diachronous dialogue. Later, in the 12th and 13th centuries, the in-depth theological dialogues and correspondences began. In fact, that was the time of close relationships between the two Churches when not only the ecclesiastical authorities, but also the Byzantine state were engaged in the realization of the mutual recognition of the one and the same Orthodox faith. Over this period of intense theological dialogues between Armenians and Byzantines the two most erudite and talented Armenian theologians took the initiative. The Armenian Catholicos St. Nerses the Gracious (Shnorhali, 1101-1173) and the bishop of Tarsus, St. Nerses of Lambron (1153-1198)[67] could be considered as reformers and initiators of the second period of Armenian Christological thought. To summarize briefly their Christological reflections, one must pay attention to the classical definition of St. Nerses the Graceful: "Therefore if one nature is said for the indissoluble and indivisible union and

[65] Cf. N. Garsoïan, "Le vin pur du calice dans l'Eglise arménienne" in, *Pratiques de l'eucharistie dans les Eglises d'Orient et d'Occident (Antiquités et Moyen Âge)*, vol. I (Institutions), ed. N. Bériou et alii (Paris: Institut d'Etudes Augustiniennes 2009), 249-271.

[66] BL, 531-532, Anania Naregac'i, *Havatar'mat* (The Root of Faith), coll. *Armenian Classical Authors*, vol. X (Antellias, Lebanon: 2009), 484, 488, 543.

[67] St. Nerses of Lambron used to be renowned for his reflections on the unity of the Universal church, having obtained the name "Champion of the Church Universal". Therefore, most of his theological reflections concern the nature and mission of the Church in the Christian world, relying upon the ecclesiological vision of Christian theology in general (cf. Arch. Ashjian Mesrob, *St. Nerses of Lambron: Champion of the Church Universal* (New York: Armenian Prelacy, 1993), 22-26, 30-32).

not for the confusion, and two natures for being unconfused and immutable and not for the division, both are within the bounds of Orthodoxy".[68] It became the crucial Christological thesis for the subsequently developed Armeno-Byzantine dialogues. The way leading into union of faith between Armenian and Byzantine Churches and prepared by St. Nerses the Graceful, reached, on the Armenian side, to the willingness to recognize the Orthodoxy of the Byzantine Church in the Bishop's Synod called in 1179 by the Catholicos Gregory IV the Young (Arm. Krikor Thgha, 1173-1193). Unfortunately with the death of Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) the political events in Byzantium took such a course that the unity so pursued and desired by the Armenian and Byzantine Churches was not realized in the life of the Churches.

*3. Christological Position of the Armenian Church*

The Christological trends in Armenia in the course of their accelerated transformations may be described within the framework of changing and defining positions with regard to some important Christological notions. First of all, the rise of Nestorians in the southern regions of Armenia and subsequently the schism between the Armenian and Georgian Churches created a definite theological reaction against the Chalcedonian confession. To the Chalcedonian interpretation of the union of two natures the Armenian theologians opposed their own Christological tradition. As mentioned above, it was deeply marked by the Cappadocian Father's interpretation, namely the theories of "*mixis*" or "*krasis*". In his Encyclical letter bishop Movses of C'urtav (VII c.) criticized the Chalcedonian reformulation of what he had found in the writings and letters of the Church Fathers concerning the "*krasis*": "(...) and once I had seen and read the letters of the blessed *vardapets*, which were about the wonderful mixture and the ineffable unity, I saw that all had been transformed into such blasphemies".[69]

As patristic heritage approved by the authority of St. Gregory the Illuminator, the theory of "commixture of two natures" represented for the Armenians an Orthodox way of christologizing. Moreover, there was not any need to change or to reinterpret it. In this respect the "Seal of Faith", a patristic *florilegia* compiled by the Catholicos Komitas Ałceci (615-628) retained the Orthodox interpretation of "*mixis*"-"*krasis*".[70] Moreover, in his "Letter to the Persian Christians" he defined it as a correlation of mortality and immortality: "(...) and He joined the mortal with immortal, the corruptible and the mortal with His immortal Divinity. He joined and mixed, having transformed them into incorruptibility".[71] It is noteworthy also that in the 7th-8th centuries the authority

[68] Aram I Catholicos of Cilicia, *Saint Nerses the Gracious and Church Unity: Armeno-Greek Church Relations (1165-1173)* (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2010), 122. For the English translation of the correspondence between Nerses the Gracious, Emperor Manuel and Patriarch Michael of Constantinople, see 103-211.

[69] BL, 253-254.

[70] "Seal of Faith," 146, 248-249, 258.

[71] BL, 404.

of St. Gregory the Illuminator, regarding the theological implication of the "commixture of natures", was decisive.[72]

Yet, the most important Christological debate and central topic in the 7th-11th centuries was the tenet of the incorruptibility of Christ's flesh. As already mentioned, it was broached at the Synod of Manazkert in 726 with a view to renewing relations with the West Syrian Church under Patriarch Athanasius III. The Synod found the theological consensus, expressed more clearly in the III and VI canons:

> Canon III. We anathematize those who confess that Christ did not assume the human flesh from our corruptible and postlapsarian human nature, persisting that Christ rather assumed the prelapsarian human nature, i.e. the nature Adam had before the fall, the immortal, incorruptible and innocent nature.
>
> Canon VI. We anathematize those who do not confess the flesh of Christ incorruptible from His virginal birth for all time, not according to the nature, but rather in accordance with the unspeakable union. We anathematize also those who claim that the flesh of Christ was corruptible, imperfect and not yet glorified till the Resurrection, and then incorruptible, perfect and glorified after the Resurrection.[73]

The glorification of human flesh assumed by Christ, according to the canons of Synod, was admitted only in accordance with the union of Divine and human natures. To explain the mode of union in Christ, St. Yovhan Odznec'i (717-728) mentions also the famous expression of St. Gregory the Illuminator upon the "commixture of natures": "Hence, summing up one could say that Jesus Christ has one nature and one prosopon. Yet this is not according to the identification or in accordance with the one prosopon.[74] For if it were in this way, there would be neither the Incarnation of Word nor the deification of man (*theosis*). But the union of two natures (as I stated in many passages) was made in accordance with the unspeakable union of the Word with His body, as it was told by St. Gregory the Illuminator: "For He was united to the flesh by nature and commixed the flesh to His divinity". We thus dare to confess the one nature of Christ in accordance with that unspeakable union and inexpressible commixture (...)"[75]

The canons and the abovecited passage were deeply marked by the reflections of St. Yovhan Odznec'i's teacher, T'ēodoros K'rtėnawor (Doctor, d. c. 680). In his theological treatise against the Phantasiastae[76] he argues that "Christ assumed human nature like ours, endowed with a rational mind and soul in which He conquered corruption and death, also growing in stature as a man (...)"[77] One could to some extent find Severian arguments in the reflections of

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[72] BL, 471, 479-480.

[73] Cf. Ter-Minassiantz, *Armenische Kirche in ihren Beziehungen zu der Syrischen Kirche*, 77-80, 170-197; Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, t. II 3, 499-500; Garegin Hovsep'iantc, *Xosrovik T'argmanič, patmabanasirakan ousoumnasirout'iwn* (*Xosrovik T'argmanič: Historical and philological studies*) (St. Etchmiadzin 1899), 77-79.

[74] Arm. *miandznakanoutĭwn*, i.e. "consideration of unique prosopon".

[75] *Domini Johannis Opera*, 116-118.

[76] See note 58.

[77] P. Cowe, "Armenian Christology in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries with Particular Reference of Catholicos Yovhan Ojnec'i and Xosrovik T'argmanič," 44.

T'ēodoros, given the fact that he stresses the role of will in the fall of Adam, excluding thus the physical transmission of the sin by the flesh *per se*.[78] Nevertheless, underscoring the lack of any confusion in the union, T'ēodoros definitively rejects the Severian emphasis on the natural corruptibility of the flesh.[79] St. Yovhan Odznec'i in his turn considers the expressions "from two natures (*ek dyo physeon*)" and "one nature" (*mia physis*) both insufficient if one takes them separately.[80] He confirms indeed two sources of union and the unique subject of the attribution of these two entities at the same time. Ultimately, too, St. Yovhan Odznec'i reminds us that Christ is one in accordance with the union, and this does not include any fusion, but rather is due to the divine character of His body, as a result of unspeakable union. This idea was explained more expressively in the writings of Xosrovik. The latter accepts both the human and the divine qualifiers: "We are persuaded that one could equally mention human and divine qualifiers. For example, the flesh of the Lord is human by its nature, yet it is divine by the union. Hence, in this manner could be qualified both the passible and mortal, the impassible and immortal, being thus perfectly unified in the one (...)"[81] That is, the flesh of Christ, having become divine by the union, does not belong to man, but rather to the Word. Yet, be it said, any kind of confusion could never have taken place, for although the Godhead is the proper nature of Christ from all eternity, the manhood is the assumed reality in accordance with the time.[82]

The theological clarifications of St. Yovhan Odznec'i and Xosrovik contributed largely to the Orthodox interpretation of Severian and Julianist conceptions of the incorruptibility of the Lord's body. It would not be an exaggeration to assert that their works were the milestones on the long road to Armenian Christology's development.

Summarizing the main ideas and propositions of these two eminent Armenian theologians we can thus emphasize some important Christological statements which became decisive for the further generations of Armenian *vardabets* (doctors) and theologians.

*a.* The union of Divine and human natures is inexpressible and unspeakable, remaining *per se* a mystery for the human rational mind. There could not be any place for confusion or separation.

*b.* The human nature of Christ is not impersonal; it supposes the real, concrete party of the human nature, i. e. the concrete person (Arm. անձն-*andzn*, Gr. πρόσωπον-*prosopon*).

*c.* According to the Orthodox conception, Christ has one nature in accordance with the union, and two natures, in accordance with the Divine and human natures.

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[78] Idem.

[79] *Domini Johannis Opera*, 150-151.

[80] Shahe Ananyan, "Apologie et Christologie," 243.

[81] Xosrovik T'argmanič, Book I, 54.

[82] Idem.

*d.* The flesh of Christ was incorruptible from its birth. All the qualifiers regarding the flesh of the Lord, like "divine", "heavenly", "immortal" etc. should be interpreted only in accordance with the union.

*4. Conclusion*

Finally, we would like to make some remarks on the present significance of Monophysitism and Miaphysitism.[83] In the majority of modern western theological and historical studies the definition of the term "monophysitism" or "monophysite" is neither clear nor definite. Without entering into any historical detail, we would like to make some necessary clarifications on the use of the terms "monophysitism/monophysite" and "miaphysitism/miaphysite".

Unfortunately, it is widely accepted that the appellation "monophysite" could be applied also in the case of Oriental Orthodox or non-Chacedonian Churches, even in the Christian ecumenical era! And in some scientific publications one can easily find the definitions and formulas on monophysitism, ascribing it to Oriental Orthodox Churches, as has been noticed by Fr. Vrej Nerses Nersessian. "Thus by this definition, ideas that were ascribed to Eutyches were also ascribed to the non-Chalcedonian churches".[84] In those scientific publications there appears also the "official" accommodated use of the term "monophysite". Yet, in the theological context and vocabulary, the very implication of "monophysitism" is not acceptable by the concerned Churches as they refuse and reject completely the nomination "Monophysite".

The term "monophysite" as such appeared in a later period, after the schism of Chalcedon (451), in the writings of Anastasios of Sinai (7th C.) and John of Damascus (8th C.), when "the heat of the Monophysite dispute was long over".[85] Only after that "normative" use of the word, it became the applied term *vis-à-vis* the non-Chalcedonians both in Eastern (Byzantine) and Western traditions.[86] Moreover, the theological vision of the non-Chalcedonian theologians did not correspond to the misunderstood appellation of Byzantine authors. The non-Chalcedonian theologians were those who remained faithful to the Cyrillian faith formulation, i.e. "mia *physis* tou Theou Logou sesarkomene /one nature incarnate of the Word of God". Accordingly in their own traditions, to use the modern terms and formulations, they designated themselves as "miaphysite", i.e. the adherents of the *Cyrillian miaphysite* definition.[87] The term "monophysite" therefore, although being widely preferred in the past and even today, in most of the theological and scientific publications, is theologically and

[83] For the use of the term "Miaphysite" see Sebastian Brock, *An Introduction to Syriac Studies*, Gorgias Handbooks 4 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2006), 69; *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, ed. Ken Parry (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing 2007), 88.

[84] "Christology of the Armenian Church" in *Living Stones Yearbook 2014: Christianity Engages with Islam: Contexts, Creativity and Tensions*, ed. Leonard Harrow et al. (Living Stones of the Holy Land Trust 2014), 23.

[85] "Monophysitism," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. II, ed. A. Kazhdan (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1991), 1398.

[86] Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et Byzantins à l'époque de Photius*, 96.

[87] Cf. Brock, *An Introduction to Syriac Studies*, 69-70.

historically an incompatible view with the real nature and character of the Christological position of non-Chalcedonian Churches.

St. Cyril of Alexandria, resuming all the patristic tradition of Incarnation theology, reflects also upon the meaning of mixture or commixture which we discussed above. In the first letter to Nestorius, St. Cyril explains the orthodox conception of *mixture* (κράσεως):

> For the name *mixture* (κράσεως), some of the holy Fathers too have put, but since you say that you are afraid lest any confusion be deemed to take place, as in the case of liquids mingled with one another, I rid you from your fears, for not so did they deem (how could they?), but they used the word improperly, anxious to declare the extreme union (ἕνωσιν ἀδιάσπαστον) of the things that had come together; and we say that the Word of God came together with His proper Flesh, in union indissoluble and unalterable.[88]

In some other passages St. Cyril refers to the term α0να/κρασιφ, describing the indissoluble union of divine and human natures.

Thus, on the eve of the Council of Chalcedon the terminology of the "commixture of natures" was already defined in the light of the patristic Orthodox tradition. Yet for St. Cyril the image of commixture had also the Eucharistic signification; as the Word of God communes with our human nature by means of the Incarnation, so we are communing with his Divinity by participating in the Holy Eucharist. We have here a twofold image of the commixture of *spiritual* and *material* entities.[89]

In the light of that historical and theological development, the study of the Council of Chalcedon with its effects and influences, both on the Eastern and Oriental Churches' Christologies, must continue within the framework of the present theological dialogue between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches (since 1964/1985). In this respect it is important to clarify whether the language problem really played a decisive role in the Christological dispute or not. The study of Armenian Christological language of the $5^{th}$-$8^{th}$ centuries showed clearly that the early Armenian theologians fully acknowledged almost all the nuances and differences regarding the patristic and philosophical interpretations of the Christological terms. Therefore, the common study on the reception and adoption of early patristic Christological terms in each of the non-Chalcedonian church's tradition will become imperative. If the new *formula concordiae* is the only way to solve the Christological dispute, it will be then necessary to study more deeply at the academic level the Christological tradition represented by the non-Chalcedonian churches. Moreover, the appreciations and analyses of that phenomenon, made over the centuries by the Chalcedonian theologians and thinkers, might be reread and re-interpreted in the light of further academic studies and researches.

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[88] S. Cyril, Archbishop of Alexandria, *Five Tomes against Nestorius* (Oxford 1881), 16-17. Cf. Greek text, Cyrillus Alexandrinus, "Contra Nestorium," I, §3,3, in *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* I,I,6,22, 1.7-12.

[89] Cf. Bernard Meunier, *Le Christ de Cyrille d'Alexandrie: l'humanité, le salut et la question monophysite*, coll. *Théologie historique* 104 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1997), 183-193.

# St. Nerses the Gracious and Church Unity: Armeno-Greek Church Relations (1165-1173)*

*Aram I, the Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Seat of Cilicia*

The Council of Chalcedon (451) caused the division between the Armenian and Greek Churches. Hence, church union has always been a major issue in Armeno-Byzantine relations. The urgency towards union was sharpened by the emergence of new realities and challenges in the 12th Century in the East. The correspondence between Catholicos Nerses (d. 1173) and Emperor Manuel and the ensuing church-union negotiations constitute a significant chapter in the history of the relations between the Armenian and Greek Churches. These two Churches, which are rooted in the apostolic faith of the early Church, and sharing common teachings, traditions and values, involved themselves once more in a strenuous search to heal their division However, the two Churches differed in their motivation for, approach to, and expectations of church unity. For Byzantium, unity meant that the Church of the Empire would simply take the Armenian Church into its fold by subjugating and eventually annexing it. By realizing ecclesiastical unity, the Byzantine Empire hoped to achieve political unity and thereby restore the greatness of the Empire. M. Jugie rightly notes: "L'union religieuse des Eglises n'est pas un but mais un moyen (...) le but est politique".[1] It is no accident, therefore, that the attempt to effect church unity, both in respect to the West and East, were initiated and directly led by the Byzantine Emperors.

For the Armenians, too, political considerations played an important part in church-union efforts. In the face of the changing political landscape of the East and the growing Muslim and Latin powers, the Armenians in Cilicia were striving to achieve greater politico-military power in order to consolidate their sovereignty and strengthen their internal cohesion. As a stronghold of national unity and herald of independence, the Armenian Church played an instrumental role. In addition, Catholicos Nerses strongly believed in the vital importance of Christian unity. The zeal for unity had become the driving force of Nerses' life and writings long before he assumed the position of Catholicos. Indeed, Nerses finely balanced ecumenical concern and political considerations.

* [Editor's note:] Article sent to C. Chaillot by Catholicos Aram, with extracts taken from his book: *St. Nerses the Gracious and Church Unity: Armeno-Greek Church Relations (1165-1173)* (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia 2010). As Catholicos Aram pointed out in the Preface of his book, this study has been prepared as a dissertation for the S. T. M. degree in 1974 when he was a young priest, while the last chapter ("Looking Forward with a Renewed Vision") was written after becoming a Catholicos.

[1] Martin Jugie, *Le schisme byzantin. Aperçu historique et doctrinal* (Paris: P. Lethielleux 1941), 249.

*1. The Nature of Unity*

For Catholicos Nerses, unity is a God-given reality, grounded in the incarnation of Christ. Unity is the very essence of the church's being and the basis of her existence in time and space (...) Nerses held to the basic ecclesiological principle that the apostolic church is the firm foundation of Christian unity. Nerses repeatedly affirmed that the Armenian Church is in direct and unshakable communion with the apostolic church, having the apostolic faith and tradition at the heart of her life, mission and theology.

(...) In order to realize unity we must give priority to the substance of faith, not to its formulation; although the form may be changed, the substance remains the same. [2] Religious traditions are local customs and "not [an expression] of any increase or decrease in faith".[3]

Nerses believes that the church is the living body of Christ, not a human-made organization. He further believes that the local churches, each possessing ecclesial fullness, are the limbs, which, in communion with each other, constitute and express the one body of Christ (...) Although churches may differ on issues of minor importance, they must agree on the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

*2. The Council of Chalcedon*

Because the Council of Chalcedon was the central point of dissension between the Greek and Armenian Churches, the Chalcedonian problem occupied an important place in their correspondence, negotiations and theological talks. In fact, the Emperor's initiative was directed towards one specific goal: the Armenian Church's acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon. Yet, interestingly, the name of Chalcedon *per se* was absent from the theological dialogue. This omission was certainly not accidental. After centuries of experience with the Armenians, church and political authorities in Byzantium would have realized that they could not force the Armenian Church to accept the Council of Chalcedon as a prerequisite to church unity. Such an approach would effectively mean blocking the whole process of negotiations. Hence, the Greeks opted to refer, in the course of correspondence and negotiations, only to the Christological teachings of Chalcedon.

Nerses, too, in his letters, *Profession of Faith* and *Definition of Faith*, deliberately avoided mentioning the Council of Chalcedon; he was also careful not to criticize the Chalcedonian definition overtly. His intention was to create an open space or develop an entry point that would provide a new approach and a broader perspective to embrace both anti- and pro-Chalcedonian Christological positions. In this way, Catholicos Nerses was able to remove the question of the unity of Christ's divine and human natures from the Chalcedonian context, and address it within a larger Christological framework. More specifically, Nerses intended, first, to clarify the prevailing misinterpretations in respect both to the

[2] The Letters that Manuel, King of the Greeks and Holy Catholicoi of the Armenians, Nerses and Gregory, wrote to each other on the Question of Unity, in *The Universal Encyclical of Saint Nerses the Gracious* (Jerusalem, 1871) [henceforth mentioned as J.] 87-199, here at 133.

[3] Ibid.

Chalcedonian definition and anti-Chalcedonian attitude and, second, to find a common Christological ground on which to accommodate the two opposing views. With this clear aim in mind, the Catholicos, on the basis of the teachings of the first three Ecumenical Councils and Church Fathers, systematically and consistently assessed Christological points of pivotal importance and elucidated misperceptions related to the Christological teachings of the Armenian Church. He also anathemized heresies and heretics, namely, Apollinarism, Eutychianism, Monophysitism and Nestorianism, and interpreted the formula of "one nature" in the context of Cyrilian Christology.[4]

Catholicos Nerses made it clear to the Greeks that the Armenian Church anathemises those, like Nestorius, who separate the two natures, and those, like Eutyches, who in unity confuse the natures.

Nerses did not categorically refute the expression of "two natures". He explained that "one nature" is used in the sense accepted and used by Saint Athanasius and Saint Cyril and that it refers precisely to the unconfused and indivisible unity of the divine and human natures. Nerses states: "Instead of one person in Christ, that you say and is correct and, in fact, is professed by us, we say one nature. These [formulations] are similar and are not due to heretical opinions".[5] On the other hand, by frequently mentioning the terminology of "two natures", the Catholicos intended to show that the Armenian Church did not reject the existence of two natures in Christ and that she was not monophysite. In his words: "We do not avoid saying two natures, provided that it does not imply division according to Nestorius, but only to demonstrate, against the heterodox [teachings of] Eutyches and Apollinarius, that the natures are unconfused".[6] Nerses' wanted to state emphatically that the Christology of his Church was neither Eutychian nor Apollinarian, but essentially Cyrilian.

Nerses questioned stereotypes and frozen formulas; he was interested in the reality they sought to describe.[7] Terminology was not of ultimate validity for

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[4] J. 96, 97, 124-127, 149-152. The Armenian Christology is based on the teachings of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, who defined the unity of the divine and human natures of Christ through his well-known formula: *mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene* (one incarnate nature of the Word of God). The Armenian Church has firmly maintained the unity of Christ's natures, rejecting the confusion or mingling of the natures taught by Eutyches and the separation of the natures taught by Nestorius. In describing the mystery of the hypostatic unity of divinity and humanity, the four Chalcedonian adverbs have always been used by the Armenian Christology. These are: 'without confusion' (*asynkhytos* - ἀσυγχύτως), 'without change' (*atreptos* - ἀτρέπτως), 'without division' (*adiairetos* - ἀδιαιρέτως) and 'without separation' (*akhoristos* - ἀχωρίστως).

[5] J., 96.

[6] Ibid.

[7] According to some scholars, the Armenian Church rejected the Council of Chalcedon because she had difficulty understanding the language of Chalcedon. On this point, E. Dulaurier writes: "La langue arménienne, alors peu travaillée, n'avait pas la faculté d'exprimer avec précision et netteté les abstractions de la théologie grecque, et donnait souvent un sens contraire à la pensée qu'il s'agissait de rendre, et sur l'intelligence de laquelle reposait cependant l'entente des différentes communautés chrétiennes. Les mots grecs *physis*, *ousia* et *hypostasis* (φύσις, οὐσία et ὑπόστασις), c'est-à-dire, *nature*, *substance* et *personne*, ne pouvaient pas être rigoureusement traduits dans la langue arménienne, où souvent l'expression *hypostase* ou *personne* (*pnouthioun*) était confondue avec l'idée de *physis* ou *nature*. Ainsi, lorsque les Grecs disaient que Jésus-Christ avait *deux natures*, les Arméniens croyaient que cette définition impliquait la coexistence de *deux personnes*, idée qu'ils rejetaient bien loin; et eux-mêmes,

him. The following words of the Armenian Catholicos remain valid today: "If one nature is said for the indissoluble and indivisible union and not for the confusion, and two natures for being unconfused and immutable and not for the division, both are within the bounds of Orthodoxy".[8] Nerses endeavoured to establish a dynamic complimentarity between Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian Christological formulas: with the one to fight Nestorianism, and with the other Eutychianism.[9] Within this framework Nerses assured the Greeks that "you are as far from the division of Nestorius as we are from the confusion of Eutyches".[10] More precisely, Nerses insisted that the Armenians are not monophysite[11] as the Greeks are not dyophysite. He repeatedly stated that the divine and human natures, with their specific properties, are united hypostatically in Christ without confusion, without change, without division and without separation.[12] Indeed, the proposal of Nerses represented a sound Christological compromise and set a solid basis for reconciling pro- and anti-Chalcedonian teachings.

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voulant, dans leur idiome, prouver leur orthodoxie, en tout conforme à la foi de Chalcédoine, et montrer qu'il y avait en Jésus-Christ une *seule et unique personne* (*hypostase*), disaient une *seule et unique nature* ou *essence* (*pnouthioun*), expression qui leur attirait les censures des Grecs" (E. Dulaurier, *Histoire, dogmes, traditions et liturgie de l'Eglise arméniennne orientale*, Paris, 1855, 30-31). K. Sarkissian argues that the Armenian Church did not reject the Council of Chalcedon because the Armenian language was inhospitable to the terminologies used by Chalcedon: "The rejection was a very natural and reasonable act, closely consistent with their (Armenians) doctrinal position, when seen in the context of their historical and theological tradition" (K. Sarkissian, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church*, London, 1965, 20-21).

[8] J. 97.

[9] J. 236.

[10] J. 147.

[11] Western theologians and church historians seem to have corrected their traditional error of accusing the Armenian Church of being monophysite. For example, Adolf von Harnack, an authority in Church doctrine, asserts that "the Armenian Church is not monophysite but Cyrilian" [*History of Dogma*, trans. N. Buchanan, Vol. IV (Boston: 1898), 223]. J. Karmiris, a highly respected Greek Orthodox theologian and an expert on Armenian Church history, writes, "The Armenian Christology is grounded upon the Cyrilian Christology" (J. Karmiris, *Relations*, Athens, 1967, 42, in Greek).

[12] The Christological teachings of the Council of Chalcedon underwent a certain evolution in later centuries. This trend is particularly noticeable in the later periods of the Armeno-Byzantine Church relations. Der Nersessian describes this evolution in the following way: "Before the twelfth century there is a very rigid attitude on both sides, each one interpreting the doctrine of the other in its most extreme terms. The Greeks were not willing to admit that the Armenian formula of one nature differed from that of Eutyches. The Armenians would not recognize that the Greek formula differed from the Nestorian heresy, and they continually attacked the Council of Chalcedon and the *Tomus Leonis*. In the second period, that is, in the twelfth century, there is a notable change. The Greeks concede that the Armenians do not follow Eutyches, but they still want them to discard the formula of one nature. The Armenians accept their explanations; they no longer accuse the Greeks of Nestorianism and avoid references to the Council of Chalcedon. They continue to defend the Armenian formula which is in keeping with the teaching of the Church Fathers, especially of St. Cyril of Alexandria, but they show a greater willingness to speak of two natures. The form they prefer is 'of two natures (...)' " (Sirarpie Der Nersessian, *Armenia and the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), 50-51.

*3. Mutual Love: the Basis of Unity*

In his talks with the Byzantine representatives and in his letters, the Catholicos stresses again and again the necessity of mutual love and compassion... Because the Church is a communion (*koinonia*) of love, it should foster respect towards others' traditions and theological teachings; this respect should constitute an essential feature of Christian unity.

Nerses reminded the imperial delegates that the long-standing doctrinal controversies, followed by mutual accusation, anathemas and enmity, had broken the fellowship of love between the Churches. He affirmed that all the Churches should be brought together once again under one Head, Jesus Christ[13] through the bond of love, which is the heart of Christian life and the solid foundation of unity (...) For Nerses, "useless quarrel" do not profit the Church and, in fact, the Church had gained nothing from "futile triumphalism" for so many centuries.[14] He constantly reminded the Byzantine Emperor and the Ecumenical Patriarch that love, not "the subtlety of words,"[15] is essential for unity.

According to Nerses, divergences existing between the Churches "could be corrected in time little by little through the growth of love".[16] For the Catholicos, love is a source of humility; hence, unity is restored by the "sweetest humbleness" and not "with royal frightful power".[17] He reminded the Greeks that such behaviour creates more division within the Church. Arrogance of power must have no place in unity; the Christians must seek to be "healthy in humility than to remain sick in pride".[18] Therefore, love should replace hate, humility should replace arrogance, trust should replace estrangement, and cooperation should replace isolation: this is the way leading the Churches to unity.

The concern of the Armenian spiritual leader was *par excellence* ecumenical and his approach holistic and global. In the changing politico-religious landscape of the East and tremendous challenges facing the Churches, the Catholicos clearly discerned the impending danger for Christianity and its far-reaching repercussions for the whole region. He realized that sooner or later Christian survival would be at stake in the East, and he made an urgent appeal to all the Churches to come closer to each other, to restore true love between the Christians and give tangible expression to the church's God-given unity.

*4. Equality, not Dominion*

Nerses firmly believed that Christian unity was fundamentally a communion of faith, not submission. From the very inception of Armeno-Byzantine Church-union negotiations, the Armenian Catholicos made it clear that before Christ, the Head of the church, all Churches are equal, irrespective of their material strength

[13] J. 163.
[14] J. 165.
[15] J. 163.
[16] J. 161.
[17] J. 113.
[18] J. 139.

or numerical size (...) For Nerses mutuality is a key factor in any efforts aimed at unity. The Churches must engage themselves in a process of mutual corrections for the sake of unity, not "turning from error to truth (...)"[19]

Nerses argued that the Churches should talk to each other frankly and freely on an equal footing and with equal rights.[20] He reacted firmly against the conditions for unity put forward, in the form of an ultimatum, by Byzantium. Reminding the Emperor Manuel of how the imperial Church had treated the Armenians, particularly after the division in Eastern Christendom, Catholicos Nerses urged him to treat the other churches as equals, because we are all "limbs" of the one Body of Christ.[21]

The preservation of the autocephaly of the Armenian Church was, for the Armenians, a major concern. The Byzantine Empire consistently attempted to abolish it by subjecting the election of the head of the Armenian Church to imperial ratification. The Armenian Church, which was the strong basis of the nation's unity, and, in the absence of political power, acted as the leader of the nation, refused to compromise its independence. The position of Catholicos Nerses could not have been otherwise.

### *5. The Role of Prayer*

Prayer was central in Nerses' endeavours for unity. The Catholicos deeply believed that any efforts for Christian unity have a "divine and not human"[22] origin, and that unity, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, is broken because of human sin. Nerses repeatedly stated that in seeking the unity of the Church, we must speak, write and accept what the Holy Spirit wills and tells us.[23] He insisted that the Churches could not be reunited through human efforts only, but through prayer and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Stressing the vital role of prayer, the Catholicos suggested that Emperor Manuel recommend that all the Churches within the confines of the Empire offer special prayers for the unity of the Church, as he himself had done in the churches in Armenia and Cilicia.

By pointing out the pivotal importance of prayer, Nerses also sought to involve the people at grassroots level in the common work for unity. For the Catholicos, unity was not an agreement reached between a few people. The Church being the people of God, he believed that the participation of the whole people in efforts directed to Christian unity was crucial. According to Nerses, any theological agreement reached by clergy must be eventually owned by the whole Church. Therefore, he insisted, both in his correspondence and theological dialogue, that he could not take any tangible steps on the way to unity without involving the clergy and the *pleroma* of the Church in this important process.[24] This was not a diplomatic approach on the part of Nerses. In fact, being the

[19] J. 161.
[20] J. 118.
[21] Ibid.
[22] J. 117, 146.
[23] J. 210.
[24] J. 147, 153, 159.

head of a Church, which from its very inception had been a people's Church, with the active participation of laity in all aspects and domains of Church life, Catholicos Nerses could not have adopted any other approach to Church unity.

### *6. Concern for Identity*

Catholicos Nerses was sincere in his desire and endeavours to restore the unity between the Armenian and Greek Churches. For the Catholicos, although faith rooted in the Scriptures and Tradition was the source of unity, faithfulness to the teachings of Church Fathers and local traditions was imperative as well. Nerses underscored the complementarity between faith and faithfulness.

In fact, for the Armenians, who had neither political support nor material wealth, and were beset by Greek, Latin and Muslim powers, identity was a major factor for survival and a source of self-confidence and inner strength. Therefore, it was crucial for the Armenians to preserve their identity, and the role of the Church was, indeed, instrumental in this respect. Nerses was highly sensitive and extremely alert about the question of identity. This concern was constantly and sharply raised throughout the Church-union discussion. Besides political, ethnic and cultural considerations, for the Armenian Catholicos the issue of identity was also an ecclesiological question, since it was related to the self-understanding and self-articulation of a Church in a specific milieu.

Nerses envisaged a model of unity in which the theological identity, doctrinal teachings and institutional autonomy of the Churches are fully respected and even enhanced: "The colour of the body, whether it be black or white, does not harm the body if its constitution is healthy. Likewise, of those whose faith is sound, differences in respect to feasts or other traditions of the church are not harmful to souls".[25] But, he felt that the Churches must be one in essential matters that touch the very core of Christian faith and the foundation of the Church. The concept of unity in diversity and diversity in unity, which has become a significant aspect and a major principle of the ecumenical vision of unity, is clearly displayed in the letters, pastoral writings and theological dialogue of Catholicos Nerses. He deeply believed in Christian unity and strove unceasingly for its fulfillment, remaining at the same time strongly attached to the doctrinal attitude, theological teachings and ancient traditions of his own Church. He did not see any discrepancy between them, but rather mutuality and complementarity.

### *7. The Broad-Mindedness of the Armenian Church*

Under Catholicos Nerses, the spirit of tolerance, which had always characterised the Armenian Church, thrived. Nerses' approach was neither exclusive nor triumphal, neither aggressive nor reactive, but assertive. Nerses also repeatedly reminded the Emperor and the Greek Church, through his correspondence and in the course of negotiations, that what he says is what the Armenian Church has inherited from the early Church Fathers of the one undivided Church.

[25] J. 138.

Furthermore, Nerses assured the Greeks that what he states is the "whole truth", that he is not "hiding" anything or saying things "to please" them.[26]

In his vigorous attempt to move towards the unity of the Church, Catholicos Nerses even sought a *modus vivendi* between the Christological teachings of the Armenian and Greek Churches on the basis of Cyrilian Christology.[27] This was, indeed, a remarkable step and a major breakthrough in the context of bitter Christological controversies caused by the Council of Chalcedon for seven centuries.[28] Although his approach throughout the Church-union efforts was conciliatory, he was not prepared to compromise the core of the Christological teachings and doctrinal attitude of the Armenian Church. Nerses' main thesis was that in the course of the discussions it became apparent that "the Armenians were mistaken in thinking that the Greeks leaned towards Nestorianism, just as it was an erroneous belief of the Greeks that the Armenians follow Eutyches".[29] The Catholicos expected that the Greeks would respond positively to this ecumenical and broad-minded approach of the Armenian Church. Indeed, the list of demands sent by the Byzantine Empire shocked him.

In his union-efforts, Nerses' strategy was to preserve the autocephaly, keep the doctrinal position, affirm the identity, maintain the theological teachings of the Armenian Church, and reach a mutually agreed consensus on Christology on the basis of the teachings of Saint Cyril of Alexandria.

### *8. Catholicos Nerses: an Ecumenical Saint*

Three principles constituted the basis of Nerses' ecumenism: First, despite the prevailing theological differences, the communion of love and the spirit of fellowship must continue to sustain the relations of the Churches. These basic imperatives of Christian unity must be deepened and concretely articulated in the common life of the Churches. Second, the Churches should overcome isolation and stagnation and become involved in frank dialogue and closer cooperation. Indeed, dialogue promotes greater understanding, and collaboration deepens mutual trust. Third, without minimizing the importance of their own theological teachings and doctrinal positions, the Churches must transcend their divergences, which often result from different terminologies and non-theological factors, in order to restore their broken communion on the basis of the Bible, the Tradition, the apostolic faith, the first three ecumenical councils, and the teachings of Church Fathers.[30]

As a great theologian, Nerses expressed broad perspectives and a clear ecumenical vision and was able to open his Church to new horizons by engaging her in close relations and meaningful dialogue with other Churches.

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[26] J. 87, 106, 120, 139, 143.

[27] For an extensive discussion of the ecumenical vision of Nersēs, see A. Keshishian, "Nersēs the Gracious: the Greatest Ecumenist of the Armenian Church. The Ecumenical Relations of Nersēs the Gracious," *Hask* (1973): 11-12, 502-511. See also K. Sarkissian, "L'unité chrétienne dans la tradition de l'Eglise Arménienne," *Bulletin d'Orientation Oecuménique* (1958): 15, 7-10.

[28] J. 151.

[29] Der Nersessian, *Armenia*, 45.

[30] In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity.

Besides being a great saint of the Armenian Church, he can be also considered as an ecumenical saint for all times. His pastoral letters, his Church-union correspondence, and his theological and doctrinal treatises, which display a profound zeal for Christian unity, are masterpieces of a genuine ecumenical spirit. They provide even for today new perspectives and insights, challenges and guidelines for a closer ecumenical cooperation and greater work for Church unity.

*9. Looking Forward with a Renewed Vision*

Indeed, since the completion of this study remarkable changes have occurred in the world Christendom in general and in inter-Orthodox and intra-Orthodox relations in particular. With the advance of the ecumenical movement, the churches have come closer to each other.

(...) The growth of theological dialogue and ecumenical collaboration and the active participation of the Orthodox Churches[31] in the world-wide ecumenical movement have had a strong impact on relations between the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches.[32] In fact, after many centuries of doctrinal controversies, resulting by their alienation and isolation from each other, a new page of mutual understanding and closer ecumenical co-operation was opened in the life of these two church families of the Orthodox tradition when their theologians embarked in 1964 on an informal theological dialogue under the umbrella of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches (...)[33] These encounters (from 1985 to 1993) have produced two agreed statements aimed at Christological consensus,[34] as well as a pastoral statement

[31] For a critical assessment of the contribution of the Orthodox Churches to the ecumenical movement, consult Aram I, *Orthodox Perspectives*, 111-121; Idem, *In Search of Ecumenical Vision* (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia 2000), 116-117; 269-274; Idem, *For a Church Beyond its Walls* (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia 2007), 163-165; 221-227; Idem, *Pour un Monde Transformé* (Antelias, Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia 2008), 189-191; 255-262.

[32] The Syrian, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian and Indian Churches, otherwise known as pre-Chalcedonian Churches or sometimes wrongly referred to in the textbooks of church history as Monophysite Churches, presently are called, particularly in ecumenical circles, *Oriental Orthodox Churches*. The Orthodox Churches, which are sometimes referred to as Chalcedonian Churches or again wrongly, as Diophysite Churches, actually are known in the ecumenical context as *Eastern Orthodox Churches*, although they prefer to call themselves *Orthodox Churches*.

[33] Faith and Order has organized four theological dialogues: Aarhus, Denmark 11-15 August 1964; Bristol, England 25-29 July 1967; Geneva, Switzerland 16-21 August 1970; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 22-23 January 1971. For the joint statements of these encounters, see M. Fouyas, *The Person of Jesus Christ in the Decisions of the Ecumenical Councils* (Addis Ababa: Central Printing Press, 1976), 253-263.

[34] It is important to note that the christological consensus reached in this formal theological dialogue relied largely on the results of the unofficial theological encounters between the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox theologians, organized by Faith and Order. The christological discussions of the four unofficial consultations of *Pro Oriente* (a Roman Catholic ecumenical foundation created by the Archdiocese of Vienna, Austria), which have taken place between the theologians of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church (Vienna, 7-11 September 1971; Vienna, 3-9 September 1973; Vienna, 30 August-5 September 1976; and Vienna, 11-17 September 1978) have also contributed to the debate and agreements of the Oriental Orthodox–Eastern Orthodox theological dialogue. For the communiqués of these consultations, see *Christ in East and West*, eds. P. R. Fries and T. Nersoyan (Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 201-211; and for an assessment of the

outlining the possible ways that the churches might collaborate on the local level and a guideline for lifting mutual anathemas. These statements[35] were sent to the heads and holy synods of the churches of both families for further study and reaction.[36]

As Archbishop, I happened to be one of the founding members of this Joint Commission, and I took an active part in all aspects and stages of its work. The Joint Commission, indeed, made remarkable achievements by elucidating the prevailing misconceptions, affirming common ground, and seeking consensus on issues which caused division. However, there are still a number of pending questions of doctrinal, canonical, liturgical and pastoral nature, which, I believe, require further study and comprehensive discussion. It is, therefore, too early to make a theological analysis of these agreed statements and pass judgement. The responses of the Churches to the *consensus* documents are crucial to determine the future course of this theological dialogue.

Without undermining the existing divergences in respect to the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, the discussions of the *Joint Commission* have pointed out that the major issue between the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches is Christology and, more specifically, the Christological teachings of the Council of Chalcedon. A significant step forward was taken in this area. In fact, the representatives of the two families affirmed that:

1. They accept the first three Ecumenical Councils, which form their "common heritage",[37] and share "the Apostolic faith of the undivided Church of the first centuries", which is confessed in their "common Creed".[38]

2. They condemn the Nestorian and the Eutychian heresies, and consider the formula of Saint Cyril of Alexandria, *mia physis* (*hypostasis*) *tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*—one incarnate nature of the Word of God, as the "common ground" of their Christological teachings.[39]

On the basis of this common position they stated that:

1. "Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ, do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ, do not thereby deny the continuing

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findings of these consultations, see Aram I, *Orthodox Perspectives on Mission* (Oxford: Regnum Lynx, 1992), 89-92.

[35] For the full texts of these statements, see *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. C. Chaillot, (Geneva, 1998), 58-68.

[36] It seems that the multiple concerns facing the Orthodox Churches and the need for further clarity in respect to some aspects of the agreed statements and particularly to the next phase of this process, which were raised by some churches, have hampered the continuation of the dialogue. The co-chairmen of the *Joint Commission* last year [Editor's note: probably 2009, as the book by Aram I was published in 2010] came to Antelias to consult about the possibilities of reactivating this important process. I believe that the continuation of this dialogue, probably with a new approach, methodology and emphasis, is crucial for a more organized and effective witness of Orthodoxy in the world.

[37] *Towards Unity*, 63.

[38] Ibid., 60.

[39] Ibid., 60, 63.

dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion".[40]

2. "We have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith,[41] and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic Tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways". And, hence, they affirmed that, "it is this common faith and continuous loyalty to the Apostolic Tradition that should be the basis of our unity and communion".[42]

3. *They agreed "to lift all of anathemas and condemnations" of the past.*[43]

4. They also said that their "mutual agreement is not limited to Christology, but encompasses the whole faith of the one undivided Church of the early centuries".[44]

Looking back to the Nerses-Michael-Manuel correspondence and negotiations, one may safely assert that all these convergent perspectives and approaches and the emergence of Christological consensus, outlined in the agreed statements, were already articulated in the 12th century in the *Profession of Faith*, the *Definition of Faith* and the letters of Catholicos Saint Nerses (...)

The agreements produced by the *Joint Commission* point towards the direction of unity of faith. This process represents a promising beginning and should continue with a firm commitment. Two crucial questions now face the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches: *First, how can they deepen, broaden and solidify their common grounds in Christology and ecclesiology? Second, how can they take the spirit and vision of this dialogue from the conceptual level to the reality of life, namely to the people at the grassroots?*

My predecessor, Catholicos Karekin II of blessed memory, in his book, *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church*, states: "The post-Chalcedonian centuries have shown most convincingly that Orthodoxy, as a living faith being witnessed by the life of the Church, was maintained equally in both the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian Churches."[45] I agree. These two families of the Orthodox tradition share a common spirituality, common identity and *ethos*. The existing diversities, as an expression of the richness of Orthodoxy, should be maintained and enhanced to the extent that they do not hinder the process towards the restoration of pan-Orthodox unity (...) It is not possible to rewrite history. Nor is it easy to change misperceptions and transform stereotypes, that are deeply rooted in our Churches' common consciousness and theological heritage. The two Orthodox families have undergone different historical processes. Besides our common identity, each family has shaped inner kinship and affinities. Furthermore, within each family each individual Church has developed her spiritual heritage in close association with her cultural and national values

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[40] Ibid., 61.

[41] Emphasizing that their Christology is fundamentally the same and that they differ only in formulations, a few theologians have even suggested a new *formula concordiae*.

[42] *Towards Unity*, 64.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., 61.

[45] Sarkissian, *Chalcedon*, 217.

and traditions. We cannot simply ignore these realities. However, the bitter experiences of the past must remind us of the urgent need for Orthodox unity in a world full of new heresies which threaten the integrity and credibility of the Christian faith. Hence, we must look forward with a renewed vision.

The Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, in a speech before the Institute of Higher Coptic Studies in Cairo in 1959, said: "In truth we are all one, we are all Orthodox Christians (...) We have the same sacraments, the same history, the same traditions. The divergence is on the level of phraseology".[46]

The ecumenical movement seeks a model of unity that opposes those patterns of uniformity that have been imposed and promotes reconciled diversity. Indeed, Orthodox unity could be a concrete example of such a vision of visible unity. In the past, political factors and terminological misunderstandings have played a pivotal role in generating intra-church and inter-church controversies and divisions. Such problems do not exist anymore. Today these two Orthodox families face common challenges, which impel them to strengthen their commonalities and reconcile their divergences through a more organized collaboration and frank theological dialogue on the local, regional and global levels. In fact, with their distinctive values and rich spirituality, and with their profound sense of history and tradition, these ancient Churches of world Christendom are called to give a united witness to the world. This is possible when they commit themselves to overcoming their prejudices and manifesting concretely the inner unity of Orthodoxy rooted in a common apostolic faith and tradition.

In 1173, in his last letter addressed to the Armenian clergy just before his death, Catholicos Saint Nerses the Gracious wrote that when we come together to discuss the unity of the Church, we must realize that we are called to this sacred work by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he said, we must not stop praying; furthermore, we must "think, speak and do that which pleases the Holy Spirit, and that which follows His will for the edification and firmness of the Catholic, Apostolic and Orthodox Church".[47] The Armenian Church continues her ecumenical involvement with this spirit. The ecumenical principles of Catholicos Nerses and his vision of unity remain the basis and the driving force of the ecumenical engagement of the Armenian Church.

[46] T. Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1972), 321.
[47] J., 210.

# The Christology of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church[1]

*Getatchew Haile*

Behold, I begin the song of hymn and prayer,
To strike the chords of your praise with a spiritual stick and word.
O Dioscorus, prosper my tongue with your ability.
For you are the son of the Godhead by grace and compassion.
*Image Hymn (Mälk) of Saint Dioscorus*

*Introduction*

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church belongs to the group of Churches identified as Oriental Orthodox Churches, which distinguishes itself from the group of Eastern Orthodox Churches. The two groups are also called non-Chalcedonians, and Chalcedonians, respectively, divided as a result of a gross misunderstanding that took place at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 when discussing the person of Jesus Christ. They ended the assembly with the non-Chalcedonians accusing the Chalcedonians of believing in Nestorius's Dyophysitism and the Chalcedonians accusing the non-Chalcedoneans of believing in Eutyches's Monophysitism.

The group of non-Chalcedoneans, to which the Ethiopian Orthodox Church belongs, includes the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria (Egypt), the Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch (Syria), the Armenian Apostolic Church of Etchmiadzin (Armenia), and the Indian Orthodox Church of Malabar or Malankara (India). Their number has increased by one since the separation, in 1991, of Eritrea, the northern province of Ethiopia, from Ethiopia and the formation of the Eritrean Orthodox Patriarchate, with the same faith/theology and liturgy as the mother Ethiopian Church.

Since recent time, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has added to its name the indigenous term, *täwaḥədo*, meaning "union", (of divinity and humanity in Christ). For the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Jesus Christ is both perfect man and perfect God. It recognizes the first three Ecumenical Councils at which this faith was defined or revisited: Nicaea, 325; Constantinople, 381; and Ephesus, 431.[2]

The Ethiopian Church's participation in the deliberations of the aforementioned Ecumenical Councils, where and when the Christological issue at hand was discussed and settled, might be described as direct and indirect. As its diocese and daughter from its inception in the fourth century to the twentieth century, and now a sister, the Church received the doctrine through the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. Therefore, the faith of the former is identical to

[1] This paper is based on the author's study of the authoritative religious literature of the Ethiopian Orthodox *täwaḥədo* (also written as Tewahedo) Church and some historical sources by Western (Catholic) writers. The quotations from local sources are in the author's English translation.

[2] M. Daoud and M. Hazen, *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa, 1954), 27 (parag. 63).

that of the latter. He that seeth the mother seeth the daughter. It is based on the Bible and the expositions of the common Alexandrian Church Fathers who influenced the discussions and the outcome of the Councils (such as Athanasius, Timothy, Cyril, and Dioscorus), and the other early Church Fathers (such as John Chrysostom, Epiphanius of Cyprus, Ephrem of Syria, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus) whose writings emphasize and further elucidate the faith of their predecessors. The Ethiopian Church immortalizes these fathers by upholding their teaching faithfully as well as by dedicating an anaphora to each name of many of them.[3]

*Christology*

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church believes and teaches that Christ exists as one person from two natures (divine and human) united in an inseparable and unmixed union (*täwaḥədo*).[4] The meaning of the word from which this form *täwaḥədo* derived is "become one". Grammarians call the form "reciprocal", that is, a form expressing an act in which two parties perform the same act in unison at the same time and on an equal level. Actually, it imports the meaning of Cyril's *μία* more accurately than any other expressions.

From the point of view of the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the West (which includes the Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches), the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church, along with the sister Churches, is accused, baselessly, of adhering to the Monophysite heresy of Eutyches (c. 378–454), who maintained that Christ's body "was not of the same substance with ours".[5] But the accusers do not support this serious and insulting accusation with any credible evidence these Churches accept. Although the burden of proof rests solely on the shoulders of the accusers, the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church has, in the interests of the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ and his Holy Apostles, declared repeatedly its faith and that it rejects as heresy Eutyches's Monophysitism as well as Nestorius's Dyophysitism. Since the interest is common, it is incumbent upon the other group to declare in no uncertain terms that it rejects Nestorius's Dyophysitism.

The local sources testify that Archbishop Dioscorus of Alexandria, who was in Chalcedon for the 451 Ecumenical Council (which supposedly met to condemn Eutyches's heresy), has not only disassociated himself with Eutyches, but has also excommunicated him.[6] As for the stand of the Ethiopian teachers, for whom Dioscorus was their father, it will suffice to show how they begin their

[3] M. Daoud and M. Hazen, *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church*; Ernst Hammerschmidt, Studies in the Ethiopic Anaphoras (Wiesbaden, 1987); Habtemichael Kidane, "Anaphoras," in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 1, ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003), 251-53.

[4] Holy Synod of the Orthodox Tewahedo Church of Ethiopia, *A Short History, Faith and order of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church* (Addis Ababa, 1983).

[5] Charles Joseph Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils, from the Original Documents* (translated from the German, *Conciliengeschichte*), 3 (1883), 142 and 192.

[6] See *Synaxary*, Näḥase 23 (= E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church. A Translation of the Ethiopic Synaxarium.* መጽሐፈ: ስንክሳር: 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1928).

daily prayer: "Come to me, O Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, and the incarnated Son of Mary".[7]

Children are instructed in their faith through a catechism titled, *Amməstu A'əmadä Məṣṭir*, "Five Pillars of Mystery": Mysteries of The Trinity and Unity of God, Incarnation, Baptism, Eucharist, and Resurrection. The text has been published more than once, and manuscript copies of it are found in church and private libraries. It is also included in an Amharic book on the faith and teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church by *Abba* Mälkäṣedeq, the former archbishop of Saint Paul Theological Seminary in Addis Ababa. The following is a translation of the section on the Mystery of Incarnation:[8]

> God the Son is called the *messenger* in His distinctive *person* (በተለየ *ኣካሉ*; *bätäläyyä akalu*), *Son* in His distinctive name, *begotten* in His distinctive state, and *rational* in His distinctive nature. The Son was born from the Father before the world, person from person (ኣካል ዘእምኣካል, *akal zä`əm`kal*) nature from nature (ባሕርይ ዘእምባሕርይ, *baḥrəy zä`əmbaḥəy*); He was born, not created. So the Three-Hundred and Eighteen (Nicene fathers) have explained, saying, "He was born, not created." [Nicene Creed]

Therefore, He is perfect God. And He is equal to His Father, since He is one (with him) in the Godhead. "Everything came into being through Him; without Him there was nothing that came into being". In explaining the divineness of Christ, and his only kingship, Saint Paul has declared, saying, "Honor and glory are meet to the eternal king, unextinguished light (sic), and the invisible one God, forever. Amen" [1 Tim. 1:17].[9] God the Son is light from light, and true God from true God. He is the first God. None precedes him or is greater than Him at all. He is the first and the last God [Rev. 1:8, 21:6, 22:13; Isa 44:6, 48:12].

That first God, the Word of the Father, appeared to humankind in the latter days, becoming man and wearing flesh. And He embodied His unity with humankind. He behaved like man in all respects except sin. That is, he became perfect man. He did everything that man does. Yet, He was never separated from the Father, His natural Father, and from His natural life, the Holy Spirit. He did not leave His most high throne, because He remained true God even though He was true man. Therefore, He walked back and forth on earth; He went up and down. He did everything that man does. This way, His perfect humanity became known and was understood.

*Abba* Giyorgis of Gasitsha, the fifteenth century teacher, has devoted two chapters of his voluminous *Mäṣḥafä Məṣṭir* or "Book of Mystery", to refuting the heresy of Eutyches.[10] In the first (chapter xiv), he says, among other things:

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[7] E. g. *Säyfä Mäläkot* (Sword of Divinity), a prayer book composed in the fifteenth century.

[8] Abba Mälkäṣedeq, አባ መልከጼዴቅ ሊቀ ጳጳስ፤ የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን አምነትና ትምህርት (Berkeley, California, 2002), 149-50. *Abba* Mälkäṣedeq is the former *Liqä Śəlṭanat* Habtä Maryam Wärqnäh, who, as a member of the delegation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church, participated in the bilateral consultation between theologians of the Eastern (Byzantine) and Oriental Orthodox Churches in 1964 at Aarhus, Denmark.

[9] The correct text is, "The eternal King will never die. He can't be seen. He is the only God. Give him honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen".

[10] Yaqob Beyene a= *Giyorgis di Saglā Il Libro del Mistero* (*Maṣḥafa Mesṭir*). *Parte Prima* (*text*), CSCO, 515/89, 1990a), Yaqob Beyene b= *Giyorgis di Saglā Il Libro del Mistero* (*Maṣḥafa Mesṭir*). *Parte Prima*

> Let us tell the reproach of the renegade Eutyches who said, "The body of Christ does not weary like our body and it did not suffer". O renegade Eutyches, how (dare) you say that the Incarnation of the Godhead did not weary, about which the Evangelist said, "The Lord Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of vine that Jacob had given to his son, Joseph; and Jesus, wearied out by the journey, sat there by the well" [John 4:5-6]. Behold, the pure Evangelist revealed the news of the weakness of the body of the Son of God which took place for our salvation.[11] If He were incarnated in the body of the Godhead, the whole wide world would have not been enough for Him, and the Virgin would not have been ready to be a mother. She became His mother as she is, unchanged in her essence. And He became her Son incarnated in her body, without raising her to the height of the highest heaven, and she not filling the end of ends. As He did not create for His mother a body superior to the daughters of Israel, He did not create for Himself a body of incarnation superior to the children of Galilee.[12]

In his second (chapter xvii), he ridicules Eutyches and his followers, saying, "If there is flesh in the heavens, why did [the Word] dwell in the womb of the Virgin to be incarnated? (...) If He formerly had flesh, His ancient flesh would have sufficed Him, and would have not needed the Incarnation from the Virgin".[13] The same thought had been expressed by Saint Athanasius differently long before Giyorgis, "If the existence of the flesh was originally with the existence of the divinity of the Word, the mention of Mary would have been rightly made since ancient time like the existence of the Word. If the flesh had existed since ancient time on equal basis with the existence of the Word, He would not have applied Himself to come here for His essence to wear what is equal with Him since ancient time".[14]

Having listed deeds that Jesus performed as man and God, *Abba* Giyorgis concludes in the following words as to what these deeds signify:

> Behold, the equality (in action) of humanity with divinity, is known, not in the nature of creation but in unity of existence without separation or mingling, without change or estrangement. As Incarnation shared the humiliation of humanity with divinity, divinity likewise shared the glory of beautiful worship with humanity. Behold, Jesus Christ is man and God in one existence. Behold, He is the lamb and the shepherd in one unity. Behold, He is the priest and sacrifice in one mystery. He is, indeed, the Son of God in His essence and the Son of David in His Incarnation. He is, indeed who appeared to the Prophets in various visions. When we call Him God, He is found with His heavenly God. And when we call Him human He is found with His Galilean mother".[15]

Rət´a Haymanot ("The Orthodox"), whose real name and the time he flourished in have not yet been determined, was another theologian the Ethiopian Orthodox Church put in a high position. His collection of homilies is

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(*trans.*), CSCO, 516/90 1990b, Yaqob Beyene 1993 = *Giyorgis di Saglā Il Libro del Mistero* (*Maṣḥafa Meṣṭir*). *Parte Seconda* (*text*), CSCO, 532/97 (1993): chapters 4, Nestorius; 14 and 17, Eutyches; 20, Leo; 21, Council of Chalcedon).

[11] Yaqob Beyene a= 246; Yaqob Beyene b= 151.

[12] Yaqob Beyene a= 250-1; Yaqob Beyene b= 154.

[13] Yaqob Beyene a= 288; Yaqob Beyene b= 180.

[14] HA (1967EC)= *Haymanotä Abäw* = ሃይማኖተ አበው። አዲስ፡ አበባ፡ ጥር፡ ፴፡ ቀን፡ ፲፱፻፷፯ ዓ፡ ም፡ (The Faith of the Fathers. Addis Ababa, February 7, 1975, 95-6, parag. 17-18.

[15] Yaqob Beyene a= 293-4; Yaqob Beyene b= 184.

part of the Church's patristics. In one of his homilies, he admonishes Eutyches's Monophysitism and Nestorius' Dyophysitism as follows:

> And Isaiah [11:1-2] said, "A shoot shall come out from the root of Jesse". Now Mary was likened to a shoot. "And a flower shall grow out from its stem". This means he likened the Word, which took flesh from Mary, to a flower. "And the Spirit of God shall rest on Him". This means he showed that there was nothing of the creations [human seed] that was added to the shoot and the flower, but only the Spirit of God rested on that pure flower, and made her His flesh that has soul, mind, and perfectly everything (attributed) to man except sin. He was pure in His entirety from the time He was conceived and always (thereafter), and was not touched by sin. His mouth did not lie; His lips did not utter guile; (He has) a heart that did not turn to lies, and a mind that did not deviate to what is undesirable, and a flesh that did not turn toward delight of lust. The whole God did not come from above to dwell in a man, but the Word became human. He did not change his essence but He was truly conceived in the womb of the Virgin uniting His divinity with our humanity in the womb of the Virgin.[16]

The extreme reverence the Blessed Virgin enjoys in the teaching of the Ethiopian Church has had no equal in any other Church.[17] This is because she is the mother of God. As the *Praises of Mary*, the daily prayer book sanctioned by the Church, has it in several places, "He sent his Only-Son to you [O Mary] and became man, taking flesh from your flesh and soul from your soul".[18] St. Yared, the seventh-century Aksumite priest, remembers the Blessed Virgin in his *Anqäṣä Bərhan* (Gate of Light), also sanctioned by the Church, in these words: "The Father covered you with his right hand, the Holy Spirit overshadowed you, the power of the Most High strengthened you, and Jesus Christ wore your flesh".[19] Every clergy and every praying faithful recite the *Anqäṣä Bərhan* every Sunday.

The Supplication for Mary and the Cross states,[20]

> We, Christians, bow to the ground for the honour of the Cross with fear and trembling, because the Creator himself, in the person of the Son, sanctified it with His blood, not with the blood of another one, when divinity died on it in His humanity. But humanity never separated from His divinity, nor was it mingled with it (…) Therefore, the teachers of the Holy Gospel, the likeness of the Exalted Creator, have ordered that we bow before the Cross and Virgin Mary. We bow before Mary because God, her Creator, took flesh from her flesh (…) and (we bow) before the Cross (…) because blood dripped on it, of the non-suffering Word, who suffered in the nature of the flesh.

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[16] EMML 1763 = a microfilm of an important collection of homilies by early Fathers, described in Getatchew Haile and William F. Macomber, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa and for the Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, Collegeville, Vol. V: Project Numbers 1501-2000* (Collegeville, Minnesota 1981), 218-31, here at fol. 95r.

[17] Haile Getatchew, *The Mariology of Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 242 (Rome, 1992).

[18] *WM* (1961 EC) = *Wəddase Maryam*= ውዳሴ: ማርያም። ቅዳሴ: ማርያም። የኢትዮጵያ ሊቃውንት እንደ ጻፉትና እንደተረጐሙት። (አዲስ አበባ) ፲፱፻፷፩ ዓ. ም. (*Praises of Mary. Anaphora of Mary. As the Ethiopian Erudite have Written and Interpreted*. Addis Ababa), 1961 EC= 1968/9 AD., here e. g. Wednesday, 123 and 171; Thursday, 174; and Saturday, 252 and 258.

[19] *Wəddase Maryam* and *Anqäṣä Bəhan* are parts of the Ethiopic Psalter; and as such they are copied and published many times.

[20] Haile Getatchew, "Praises of the Cross, *Wəddase Mäsqäl* by Abba Giyorgis of Gasitsha," *Aethiopica. International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies*, 14 (2011): 47-120, here at 52-3.

Emperor Zär`a Ya´əqob (1434-1468), who was at the forefront in promoting the extreme reverence of the Blessed Virgin,[21] has devoted one whole book on the theology of the Trinity and unity of God and on the birth of the Word of God eternally from the Father and in the latter days temporally from the Blessed Virgin. In his book, he has, among other things, explained a statement in the *Testament of Our Lord*:

> Our Lord said in the *Book of the Testament*, regarding the unity of his Holy Spirit (with the Body of Christ): "Let He who gives (the Communion) say, 'Jesus Christ, the Body of the Holy Spirit for the healing of the soul and body'. And he who receives says, 'Amen'". Tell me, O denier, would you say 'Jesus Christ, the body of the Holy Spirit' refers to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy Spirit? (…) The Father did not wear flesh in His body or image or *hypostasis*. Neither did the Holy Spirit wear flesh in His body or image or *hypostasis*. But the Son did wear flesh in His body, image, and *hypostasis* from Mary, who is doubly Virgin.[22] We interpret this for you (O denier), by the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ: (The book) says, "Jesus Christ, the body of the Holy Spirit" because the Holy Spirit is upon it; because He became man from the Holy Spirit and Mary, the Holy Virgin; because the Holy Spirit was added to the body and soul of Mary, and the Paraclete was united with her body and soul (…) Therefore, the Scriptures say, "He became man from the Holy Spirit and Mary, the Holy Virgin". The Paraclete increased dwelling in her; He strengthened her and cleansed her so that that she may give birth with her flesh to the fear-inspiring fire. Christ, Our Saviour, was born first from the Father before the world was created, as Our Lord himself has said in the mouth of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, "He begat me before the world and before the mountains".[23] First God was born from God, sun from sun, light from light, and Godhead from Godhead. Again He was born of Mary, and became man from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, He is called "Jesus Christ, the body of the Holy Spirit for the healing of the body and soul".[24]

The Ethiopian Church has remained faithful to the Orthodox formula of μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη or "one nature of the Word of God Incarnate",[25] preserving it in eloquent and unequivocally clear translations of Athanasius's and Cyril's succinct statements into the local liturgical language (Gə´əz) as early as the Aksumite dynasty. Saint Athanasius:[26]

> We believe the Son of God, who was born from the Father timelessly before the world, and in the latter time was born from Mary in the flesh for our salvation, as the holy Apostle declares and teaches, saying, "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman" [Gal. 4:4]. The same Son of God in the Spirit is the same Son of man in the flesh. There is no double existence in the one Son, one who is worshipped and one who is not worshipped, but one nature of the word of God Incarnate. [μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη.] He is worshipped with his Incarnation in one worship, not two Sons—one Son of God who is truly worshipped, and another from

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[21] Getatchew Haile, *The Mariology of Emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob of Ethiopia*. Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 242 (Rome, 1992).

[22] In body and mind.

[23] Not clear, perhaps Pr. 8:23.

[24] Wendt, Kurt. 1963. *Das Maṣḥafa Milād (Liber Nativitatis) und Maṣḥafa Sellāsē (Liber Trinitatis) des Kaisers Zar`a Yā´qob*, II, CSCO 235, 69-71.

[25] Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils, from the Original Documents* 3, 142 and 192, repeated by His Holiness *Abunä* Tewoflos, Patriarch of Ethiopia, adding to it that in Christ the two natures (divinity and humanity) are united in an inseparable and unmingled manner, "Confession de Foi," *Episkepsis*, 36 (1971): 10.

[26] EMML, 1736, fol. 123; *HA* = *Haymanotä Abäw*, 68-9 (parag. 1-4).

Mary who is adored as though he was born the Son of God by grace like us, all people born from God the Father.

Now Saint Cyril: [27]

> We believe that [Jesus] is the Son of God, the Godhead, in the Spirit, and the Son of man in the flesh. It is not one Son in double existence, the one who is worshipped and (another) one who is not worshipped. We do not say, but one nature of the Word of God Incarnated. [μία φύσις τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη] who is worshipped one worship in His flesh. It is not two Sons, one true Son of God who is worshipped, and (another) one who is man from Mary who is not worshipped, who became the Son of God by grace like people. We do not say (another) but He is from God, as I said, He is the Son of God, the God, is one, not another (one) who was born of Mary in the latter days, as the angel announced to Mary the bearer of God, while she asked him, "how will this happen to me when I do not know a man"? The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will shine upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you because the one to be born of you is holy, the Son of God. Therefore, the one who was born from the Holy Virgin Mary is the true Son of God, and true God, not only (a son) by grace and flesh. He who became man from Mary with the Spirit is indeed, God, Son of God.[28]

The Church's basic and major sources for its dogma are the *Qerələs*,[29] translated from the Greek in the sixth century, and, the *Haymanotä Abäw*,[30] translated from Coptic Arabic, as of the seventeenth century.[31] These two volumes are huge compendiums of sermons, homilies, and treatises of over sixty early Orthodox Fathers in which the fact that Christ is both the perfect God and perfect man has been expounded. They are read regularly in church for the churchgoers. One of the chairs in Ethiopia's traditional higher education is dedicated to *Liqawənt* or "Patristics", the statements and confessions of the faith of these fathers on Christology. Standing on equal level to the chairs of the Old Testament, the New Testament, Chants, and Monastic Literature, the chair graduates able teachers and defendants of the dogma.[32] They teach about Christ that, as God he worked miracles, and as human he died in flesh: As man God, he worked miracles and died in flesh.

A few witnesses from the *Haymanotä Abäw*[33] are fitting: John Chrysostom teaches, "[Christ] himself and His Father, who sent Him, and His Holy Spirit

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[27] Charles Joseph Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils, from the Original Documents* (translated from the German, *Conciliengeschichte*), 1 (1894), 2 (1896), 3 (1883), 4 (1896), and 5 (1896); Bernd Manuel Weischer, *Qērellos II: Der Prosphoneticos 'Über den rechten Glauben' des Kyrillos von Alexandrien an Arkadia und Marina Teil 1: Einleitung mit christologischem Florilegium* (Stuttgart, 1993), 52-6, sixth century.

[28] Sixth century, Weischer, *Qērellos II* = Weischer, Bernd Manuel, *Qērellos II: Der Prosphoneticos 'Über den rechten Glauben' des Kyrillos von Alexandrien an Arkadia und Marina Teil 1: Einleitung mit christologischem Florilegium*, Stuttgart, 1993, 52-6 (My translation from the Gə´əz).

[29] See Weischer in several volumes and Alessandro Bausi, *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, 4 (2010), 287-90.

[30] Published and reprinted in Ethiopia, e.g. *Haymanotä Abäw* (1967 EC=*HA*), but it has not been translated into any European language.

[31] *I'trāf al-abā`*.

[32] Habtemichael Kidane,"Müṣḥaf bet" *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. 3, ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 834.

[33] No attempt is made to check this quotation in their Arabic original, as there is no need for this additional work because it is the Gə´əz text the Church knows and recognizes.

know the mystery of how He suffered. He, who nullifies the power of death, died in flesh (...) He rose in the glory of His Father, taking captive the saints who were in Hades, for He is King and an invincible Lord. He ascended into heaven in great glory and sat on the right of His Father in the Holy body which He took from Our Lady, the Holy Virgin Mary, in an ineffable mystery".[34] Again, Cyril of Alexandria confesses, "We believe that the Only-Begotten Son—who was born from the Father—took flesh, became man, suffered, died, and rose on the third day, although He is immortal. And we believe in the Word of God in one existence". [35] Severus of Antioch said, "Our fathers have taught us that Emmanuel who does not suffer or die in his divine existence, suffered in flesh; He who does not suffer or die in his existence became (one) with the flesh in an inexplicable unity". [36] Another important churchman and theologian of the Church of Alexandria who issued anathemas against Eutychianism is John of Burullus (c. 540-610/12) bishop of Nikiou in Lower Egypt,[37] "Whoever says that the flesh of the Son of God is from the heavens which he brought down from the highest heaven, let him be anathematized".[38]

*Abba* Giyorgis of Gasitsha, who was locally likened to Cyril of Alexandria and John Chrysostom, teaches what the Church teaches about Christ as follows: [39]

> [Christ] walked as a man, and acted as God. He grew weary and sweated as Son of man; He healed a paralytic as God. He was invited to a wedding as man; He made water into wine as creator. He slept according to the law of one born of flesh; He woke up and rebuked the winds according to the manner of divinity (…) He died like all creatures; He tore the curtain of the Temple as Lord of the sanctuary. He stayed in the womb of the grave as a corpse; on the third day He rose as the Savior of all.

Replacing the name Monophysite with Miaphysites, because it has Cyril's "μία", does not correct the wrong identification of the Church's faith with that of Eutyches. Different entities (e.g. a sheep and a wolf) are not called by one and the same name. It is expected of scholars, especially those who aim to bring unity, to be above the fray of polemics that have been going on for ages among Churches, and report the faith as each Church confesses at present, and call the Churches, including the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church, as the faithful themselves call it.

### *The Ethiopic Equivalent of Φύσις*

The standard Gə´əz words for "nature" are *ṭäbay´*, possibly a loan word from Coptic Arabic, and "baḥrəy." In the *Synaxary*, it is reported that Leo of Rome had

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[34] *HA= Haymanotä Abäw*, 219, parag. 7-9. Cf. "He died to destroy death, he died to give life to the dead, he was buried to raise those who were buried," Anaphora of John, Son of Thunder, Marcos Daoud-Marsie Hazen, *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church*, 93, parag. 40.

[35] *HA= Haymanotä Abäw*, 254, parag. 1.

[36] *HA= Haymanotä Abäw* 370, parag. 40.

[37] http://ccdl.libraries.claremont.edu/cdm/ref/collection/cce/id/1120 (last accessed July, 5, 2016).

[38] *HA= Haymanotä Abäw* 578, parag. 9.

[39] Getatchew Haile, "Fəkkare Haymanot or the Faith of *Abba* Giyorgis Säglawi," *Le Muséon* 94 (1981), here at 243-4.

written his creed "wherein he had assigned to Christ two natures, *ṭäbay'*, and two wills after his unity". [40] The translator of a work by Jacob Baradaeus has also used this word to mean nature: "If anyone speaks about two natures (*ṭäbay'*) after unity, let him be anathematized.[41] On the other hand, Cyril's φύσις is consistently rendered with *həllawe* or "existence", "essence", from the verb *halläwä* or "to exist", "to be". This might imply that the concern and understanding of the Ethiopian theologians was not whether or not there were two natures in Christ acting in unison (which they seem to have taken for granted), but whether Christ existed in single or double existence—working miracles in his existence as the Son of God, and behaving human as the Son of Mary.

By the same token, the teachers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church accuse Pope Leo (died 461) of including in his letter (*Tome*) expressions that remind them of the Nestorian heresy, "Each of the two forms (natures) does in communion with the other that which is proper to it, since the Word (of God) performs that which belongs to the Word, and the flesh accomplishes that which belongs to the flesh. The one flashes forth gloriously in miracles, the other submits to insults". [42] Translated into English, their exact accusation of the Council of Chalcedon and those who embrace its decisions are encapsulated in the words of *Abba* Giyorgis:

> They divide the divinity and humanity of (Christ) in two ways, saying, "Divinity performs the work of divinity, and humanity performs the work of humanity". Do you really say this, O conventicle of canines,[43] "Divinity works wonders and humanity receives sufferings"? But (suffering) is not the nature of the essence of the Son of God, but of the nature of the toil of the Martyrs. These receive suffering, and God helps them in working miracles. These persevere to be martyrs, and God helps them in accomplishing the struggle. They endure torture, and God heals them with the spirit of his grace. The Saviour, on the other hand, was conceived in a womb like children while filling the world like His Father. Behold, the only God was born from the Virgin, with the seal of her virginity not demolished".[44]

They find these statements, if true, nullifying all that Saint Cyril had fought against to his last breath. Indeed, *täwaḥədo* anticipates the existence of more than one actor but united and acting in union. It tells us how the scholars understood Cyril's "μία" of the nature in Christ, the Word Incarnate.

*Chalcedon, Alexandria, and Ethiopia*

As a result of the support the Chalcedonians received from the King (Emperor Marcian, 396-457), the Alexandrian Church was torn into two: Melkites and

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[40] Mäskäräm 7.

[41] This is according to Chr. Fr. Augusti Dillmann, *Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicae* (Reprint Osnabrück, 1970), 1233.

[42] Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, 3, 318; Yaqob Beyene (1990a), 360-10; S. Ancel, "Discourse Against Catholic Doctrine in Təgray (Ethiopia): a Nineteenth Century Text," *Aethiopica. International Journal of Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies*, 15 (2012): 95. The inhumane pressure on the Egyptian delegation to the Council of Chalcedon to denounce their father and leader and to accept this statement was incredible, cf. Hefele vol. 3, 332-4.

[43] This name calling started when the opponents called the Council of Ephesus of 449, "The Robber-Synod," Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, 220ff.

[44] Yaqob Beyene, 1993, 2.

"Jacobites". The former were known as Melkites (of the King) because of the support they received from the Emperor, and the latter were called "Jacobites" because of the clandestine visits, admonitions, and consolations they received from a courageous and devoted Syrian monk, Jacob Baradaeus.[45] Archbishop Dioscorus, the legitimate head of the Alexandrian Church, was banished to Gangra right from Chalcedon, where he had been to participate in the deliberations of the Council. This provided the opportunity for the Alexandrian Melkites to install their own Greek Orthodox Patriarch (Proterius).[46]

The Alexandrian branch of Melkites, which never attained a level of historical significance, claims, nevertheless, that the Ethiopian Church was Melkite until the "Jacobite" Coptic Church won it to its side at an uncertain time. We know very little about the Aksumite bishops who came from Alexandria during that brief period of crisis to verify or refute the claim. However, there was one Aksumite bishop called Lulyanos (Julian), a name not common in the Coptic Church of Alexandria like it is in the Roman/Byzantine Church. [47] Interestingly, history records the coming to Ethiopia of a group of monks from the Mediterranean world at about the time immediately after the Council of Chalcedon. The question of whether their coming to Ethiopia at this time was a coincidence or if they were on a mission to keep the Ethiopian Church within (or to win to) the camp of the opponents of Chalcedon, has been discussed occasionally.[48]

Whatever happened in history through the centuries, the Ethiopian Church's acquaintance with the issues related to the nature of Christ was, until the coming of the Jesuits in the sixteenth century, only through the translated literature, especially the *Qerəlos*[49] and the studies and refutation of the heresies by the famous theologian *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasitsha (d. 1426).[50] One exception to this is what is preserved in a note by this same *Abba* Giyorgis. In the note, Giyorgis accuses a certain Ethiopian bishop, Yəsḥaq Təgray, of usurping "the episcopate like Meletius. His ordination, too, came from the Melkites".[51] Until then, the issues that occupied the mind of the local scholars were the concept of unity or unicity and trinity or triune of God, the image of God, the reverence of Saint Mary (personified in the icon of the Madonna and Child) and the Holy

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[45] Mark Sheridan, *From the Nile to the Rhone and Beyond: Studies in Early Monastic Literature and Scriptural Interpretation. Analecta Monastica* 12 (Rome, 2012), 39-41.

[46] Synaxary = E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church. A translation of the Ethiopic Synaxarium.* መጽሐፈ፡ ስንክሳር፡ 2 vols. 1928. Cambridge, see Näḥase 23.

[47] Getatchew Haile, "The Homily of Luləyanos, Bishop of Axum, on the Holy Fathers," *Annalecta Bollandiana*, 103 (1986): 385-91.

[48] Antonella Brita, "Nine Saints," *Encyclopaedia Ethiopica*, 3 ed. Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 1188-91.

[49] Weischer. This collection, translated from the Greek, was known in Ethiopia as early as the Aksumite dynasty. The *Haymanotä Abäw*, another similar but huge collection, was later translated from Coptic Arabic during the Gonderite dynasty.

[50] Yaqob Beyene (1990a), (1990b), (1993): (chapters 4, Nestorius; 14 and 17, Eutyches; 20, Leo; 21, Council of Chalcedon).

[51] Getatchew Haile, "Religious Controversies and the Growth of Ethiopic Literature," *Oriens Christianus* 65 (1981): 105.

Cross, and the meaning of the millenarianism (The Thousand-Year Banquet of Christ and his Saints at Mount Zion).[52]

*The Jesuits*

A problem of far reaching consequences for the Christian nation of Ethiopia was brewing in the country at the beginning of the sixteenth century. On one side, there was, internally, decadence and admiration of Islamic culture. On the other, the power of the Ottoman Empire had given the Islamic Ethiopian population in the east the spirit of revolt against its Christian overlord. It exploded in 1528. After repeated and sporadic incursion into the territories under the direct rule of the Nəguś (the Christian King), the local Islamic chief, *Imam* Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi, crossed the border of his domain and invaded the whole country with an all-out *jihad*. This destroyed the Christian institutions, setting on fire the major royal cathedrals, churches, and ancient monasteries—along with their literary heritage. The systematic destruction of Christianity included slaughtering the clergy, and asking the Christian population to choose between embracing the Muslim faith and death by the sword. The fifteen years of bloodshed were checked when a contingent of Portuguese soldiers arrived in response to an appeal from Ethiopian Christians for help. The Portuguese thought that there was a string attached to the Portuguese help.[53] At the conclusion of the war in victory, the spiritual leader of the Portuguese contingent demanded that the king honor the condition for receiving their help, which was, allegedly, to abandon the adherence to "the heretic Church of Alexandria" and be under the Roman Catholic Church. King Gälawdewos (1540-1559) and the clergy were put on the defensive. They denied the existence of such a condition and defended the Orthodoxy of the Church's faith: [54]

> This is my faith and the faith of my fathers, the Israelite kings, and the faith of my flock who are within the boundaries of my kingdom: We believe in one God and in his Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is His Word and his power. He is His counsel and wisdom, who was with Him before the world was created. And in the latter days, He came to us without divesting himself of the throne of His divinity. And He became man by the Holy Spirit and by Mary, the Holy Virgin. And He was baptized in the Jordan in the thirtieth year and became a perfect man. He was crucified on the wood of a cross in the time of Pontius Pilate. He suffered and died and was buried, and rose on the third day. After this on the fortieth day, He ascended in glory into heaven and sat on the right of His Father (…) As regards to my faith and the faith of the erudite priests who teach at my command within the boundaries of my kingdom, we do not deviate from the way of the Gospel and the teaching of our father (Saint) Paul either to the right or to the left (…)

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[52] Getatchew Haile, "Ethiopian Heresies and Theological Controversies," in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz S. Atiya, vol. 3 (New York: Macmillan, 1991): 984-87.

[53] The letter of the king does not have any condition for the help, Osvaldo Raineri, *Lettere tra i Pontefici Romani e i Principi Etiopici (sec. xii-xx).* Collectanea Archivi Vaticani 55 (Vatican City, 2005), 80-1.

[54] Edward Ullendorff, "The *Confessio Claudii* of King Claudius of Ethiopia," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 32 (1987): 166 and 170. For the Gə´əz text, see Hiob Ludolf, *Ad suam Historiam Aethiopicam antehac editam Commentarius* (...) (Frankfurt, 1691), 237-41; Edward Ullendorff, *From the Bible to Enrico Cerulli. A Miscellany of Ethiopian and Semitic Papers* (Stuttgart, 1990), 64-7; and Raineri, *Lettere tra i Pontefici Romani e i Principi Etiopici*, *Collectanea Archivi Vaticani 55*. (Vatican City, 2005), 87-97.

The Catholic pressure was mitigated temporarily when the majority of the Portuguese left and the remaining were given territory for settlement.

Within a short time, the Islamic revolt from the east revived under a new leader. This revolt from the east and a popular migration of the Oromo hordes from the south that overran the country at the same time, gravely threatened, once again, the very existence of the Christian kingdom. At this moment, the desperate King Susənyos (1607-1632) was persuaded by the Portuguese serving at his palace, of the superiority of the Roman faith over that of Alexandria, and by the thought that he would get the help his kingdom needed if he put the Ethiopian Orthodox Church under Rome. The king, unable to foresee the popular resistance to such a bold move, brought, in 1625, a Catholic Patriarch from Portugal. Hundreds of thousands of the faithful, including the metropolitan, chose martyrdom over abandonment of their *täwaḥədo* faith. The king was finally forced to restore the Alexandrian faith and abdicate his throne.[55]

*Local Character of the Controversy on the Name "Christ"*

The Christological issue the Jesuits brought to Ethiopia did not leave with them but took on a local character through defining Christ's unction or anointment as the Messiah. [56] Some of the scholars were not clear as to why Jesus was anointed. Kings are anointed to receive charismatic and divine authority to reign; bishops and priests are anointed to receive grace and spiritual authority to perform rituals. But why was Jesus, who, as the Son of God, is a giver of grace and divine power, anointed? The issue divided the theologians into three groups: Unctionists, who claimed that Christ became the Son of God by the unction of the Holy Spirit as He was in the womb of Mary; the Adoptionists, who taught that He was adopted at His third birth (the first eternal from the Father, the second from Mary, and the third at baptism); [57] and the Unionists (the Täwaḥədo), who maintained that the union of divinity and humanity is his unction.[58]

This is, more or less, a review of the history of the controversy amongst the local theologians. Today, the Church is at peace maintaining its Orthodox faith of the Christology. As repeatedly stated, for it, Christ is both the perfect God and perfect man, his divine nature and his human nature working in unison.

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[55] Beshah Girma and Wolde Aregay Merid, *The Question of the Union of the Churches in Luso-Ethiopian Relations (1500-1632)* (Lisboa, 1964); Philip Caraman, *The Lost Empire* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, and London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1985); Leonardo Cohen, *The Missionary Strategies of the Jesuits in Ethiopia (1555-1632)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009).

[56] E.g. Lk. 4:18; Acts 4:27, and 10:38; Heb. 1:9; Manuel Bernd Weischer, *Qērellos I: Der Prosphoneticos 'Über den rechten Glauben' des Kyrillos von Alexandrien an Theodosios II.* (Hamburg, 1973), 76.

[57] Donald Crummey, in his *Priests and Politicians. Protestant and Catholic Missions in Orthodox Ethiopia 1830-1968* (London: Oxford University, 1972), 24, calls it "a thinly veiled Catholicism."

[58] For more, see I. Guidi, "Un Squarcio di Storia Ecclesiastica di Abissinia," *Bessarione*, 8 (Rome, 1900); Täklä Śəllase Ṭinno-Pereira, *Chronica de Susenyos, re de Ethiopia. I* (text) (Lisboa, 1892), 216; Haile Getatchew, *The Faith of the Unctionists in the Ethiopian Church (Haymanot Mäsiḫawit)*, CSCO, 518/92 (1990): vii; and Crummey and Getatchew, "Abunä Selam: Metropolitan of Ethiopia, 1841-1867 A New Gəʿəz Biography," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 37/1 (2004): 5-40.

The Church's literature testifies that it does not deny the existence of divinity (divine nature) and humanity (human nature) in one Christ, affirming with Saint Athanasius, that the divine and the human attributes exist in him united but unconfused, unmingled, unchanged, undivided, and inseparable.

*At Present*

The Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church is obliged not to consider time as playing any role in redefining its faith. The motto of the Fathers of the past as well as of the present is in Orthodoxy, "there is no deviation to right or left from the right faith of the Fathers for any reason, be it time or hardship or distress or persecution or famine or peril or sword".[59] The Church has endured all these to preserve its faith. St. Ephraim's *Wəddase Maryam* and Saint Yared's *Anqäṣä Bərhan*, quoted above for the dogma they preserve, are the daily prayers of the clergy and of the faithful of the past as well as of the present. Also, the confession of the priest in celebrating Liturgy, as carefully formulated and faithfully preserved in the Anaphoras, connects the past with the present. It should be noted here that most of them are composed by Ethiopian theologians. Six of a selection of them are copied and reprinted by Christine Chaillot.[60] That of the Anaphora of the Apostles is reproduced here as an example:

> I believe, I believe, I believe and confess, unto my latest breath, that this [the oblation] is the Body and Blood of our Lord and our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, which He took from the Lady of us all, the holy Mary of twofold virginity, and made it one with His Godhead without mixture or confusion, without division or alteration, and He verily confessed with a good testimony in the days of Pontius Pilate, and this body He gave up for our sake and for the life of us all.

We know little about the ceremony that had been conducted in Alexandria or Cairo when a Copt was ordained a metropolitan for Ethiopia, but since autocephaly, it includes swearing an oathby the monks to be ordained bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs to uphold the Orthodox faith defined by the first three Ecumenical Councils and received through the Fathers. One is the confession of faith by the second Patriarch, His Holiness Patriarch Tewoflos (1970-1979) who invoked it at his ordination, adding to it that in Christ the two natures (Godhead and humanity) are united in an inseparable and unmingled manner.[61] The fact that most of the native monks who have been ordained so far are biblical scholars shows that one of the criteria for choosing them is a thorough knowledge of the Church's teaching, including its dogma.

The confession of faith of His Holiness *Abunä* Pawlos (1992-2013), the fifth Patriarch, of which we have a copy of the full text, can be taken as a

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[59] Cf. The *Confessio Claudii*, Edward Ullendorff, "The *Confessio Claudii* of King Claudius of Ethiopia," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 32 (1987): 166 and 170

[60] *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*, ed. C. Chaillot (Geneva, 1998), 73.

[61] Tewoflos, "Confession de Foi," *Episkepsis*, 36 (1971): 10. See his Christological Confession at the end of this volume.

testimony for the faith of the Church. The text must have been prepared by its theologians.[62]

The official book on the Church's faith and order, published in 1996 by the Patriarchate does not delve into detail but simply lists the three Ecumenical Councils whose decrees and decisions the Church recognizes.[63]

Among the Church's popular scholars of our time was the late *Liqä Ṭäbbät* Ayyalew Tamməru. He had served for many years as chairman of the council of the theologians and scholars of the Church. His Amharic book, *Mäč Tälämmädä-nna kä-Täk$^{w}$əla Zəmdənna*, "Since When is a Relationship with a Wolf a Normality", [64] was widely read among the clergy. He wrote it to refute the claim of the Catholic monk *Abba* Ayyälä Täklä Haymanot [Ayele Teklehaymanot] in his Italian doctoral dissertation on the doctrine of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, stating boldly, that the faith of the Ethiopian Church was, initially and until recent time, that Christ is in two natures, like the Catholic faith.[65] The dissertation was translated into Amharic under the title, *Yä-Ityoṗṗəya Betä Krəstiyan səlä Krəstos Baḥryat Akalawi Täwaḥədo Yämməttamnäw Təmhərt*, "The Teaching that the Ethiopian Church Believes in the Hypostatic Union of the Natures of Christ".[66] The monk did not even call the Church "Orthodox", let alone "Täwaḥədo". He knew he could get away with it, as he indeed did, but not if he had called it "dissident" (from Orthodoxy), as he had it in the title of his Italian original.

What outraged *Liqä Ṭäbbät* Ayyalew was that he faced a book whose title included the abominable expression, "Union of the Natures of Christ," and that this was what "the Ethiopian Church believes". Admitting, as his Church does, the existence of two natures, divinity and humanity, before union, Ayyalew rejects the number "two" after the process of incarnation that united them in Christ, invoking the words of Saints Athanasius and Cyril, one nature of the Word of God Incarnate:

> *Ayyälä*: "The reason why Ethiopian Christians and Catholics disagree in connection with faith relates to the natures that are found in Christ".
>
> *Ayyalew*: "According to what *Abba* Ayyälä believes, the natures would be like two tablets and Christ like an ark (for them to be housed in), because saying, 'the two natures that are found in Christ' is like saying two objects exist in one box or two people in one house".[67]

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[62] My unauthorized translation of the text published (in Addis Ababa) on Ḫamle 5, 1984 EC (= 7/12/1992), 3-8;, Pawlos, *Confession*, 1984 EC = 1992 AD). *የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተክርስቲያን ፫ኛ ፓትርያርክ ቃለ ሃይማኖት (መሐላ)* ሐምሌ ፭ ቀን ፲፱፻፺፬ ዓ/ም. See his Christological Confession at the end of this volume.

[63] Patriarchate, Addis Ababa, 1996: የኢትዮጵያ፡ ኦርቶዶክስ፡ ተዋህዶ፡ ቤተክርስቲያን፡ እምነት፡ ሥርዓተ፡ አምልኮና፡ የውጭ ግንኙነት።. But see Patriarchate, *A Short History: Faith and Order of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church*. Addis Ababa 1983. Both booklets were prepared with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's membership in the World Council of Churches and with the theological dialogue with other Churches in mind.

[64] Ayyalew Tamməru. 1953 EC (= 1960). ሊቀ ጠበብት አያሌው ታምሩ። መች ተለመደና ከተኩላ ዝምድና። Addis Ababa Mäskäräm 30, 1953 EC (= 10/10/1960).

[65] Mario da Abiy-Addi, *La dottrina della Chiesa Etiopica dissidente sull'unione ipostatica* (Rome,1956).

[66] Published in Addis Ababa on 9 Ḫamle 1951 EC (= 7/16/1959 AD).

[67] Ayyalew Tamməru, 1953EC (= 1960 AD). ሊቀ ጠበብት አያሌው ታምሩ። መች ተለመደና ከተኩላ ዝምድና። Addis Ababa Mäskäräm 30, 1953 EC (= 10/10/1960AD), 35.

The monk *Abba* Ayyäla repeated his claim using rather offensive language, stating that the Ethiopian Church's non-Chalcedonian position is due more "to ignorance of the facts of history than from any real philosophical or theological reasons. The Ethiopian Church has been cut off from the union with Rome through the culpability of the Alexandrian patriarch and the Moslems".[68]

In 1972, another Catholic scholar, Tesfazghi Uqbit, wrote a book on *Current Christological Position of the Ethiopian Orthodox Position*. Although his book is educational and void of polemics, he repeats the same claim of *Abba* Ayyälä, supporting his point that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's dogma regarding the unity of the two natures in Christ deviates from Orthodoxy because it implies that Christ is "composite".[69] These writers, however scholarly they are, never question that the deviation could be at Chalcedon.

The writings of Kidanä Wäld Kəfle might be the culprit and source that misled *Abba* Ayyälä and the others to believe that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was originally Chalcedonian like the Catholics.[70] Kidanä Wäld Kəfle starts his claim right from the title of his book, published posthumously: *Haymanotä Abäw Qäddämt*, "The Faith of the Ancient Fathers",[71] an immediate and outright rejection of the Orthodox *Haymanotä Abäw*. He opens his book with the introduction with his reasons for writing it: "The reasons for writing this booklet and for entitling (it) 'Faith of the Fathers'—even though its ability is limited—are three things. First, to show the truth, separating and cleansing (it) from falsehood, because the faith of Ethiopians that was drawn originally from the pure source, that is, the three (Ecumenical) Councils, was spoiled [i. e. corrupted] in later time".[72]

Kidanä Wäld gives obscure and unauthorized sources to support his claim, ignoring at the right times the standard sources, namely, the *Qerəlos* and *Haymanotä Abäw*, the Anaphoras, *Abba* Giyorgis, and *Rətu'a Haymanot*.[73] He conveniently ignores that the sources he quotes were composed when the Jesuits' teaching of the Catholic faith put the Orthodox clergy in disarray. That Kidanä Wäld Kəfle's heart was with the Catholics long ago is made immensely clear in the manner that he copied the anathema of one of the fathers from Dillmann, whose text the latter said he found in the *Haymanotä Abäw*. Dillmann has, "If anyone speaks of two natures after unity, let him be anathematized".[74] Kidanä Wäld has only this: "If anyone speaks of two natures".[75] For him and for *Abba*

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[68] Ayele Teklehaymanot, *Abba, The Ethiopian Church, and its Christological Doctrine*. (Addis Ababa, 1982), 18; Jacopo J. M. Gnisci, "Continuity and Tradition: The Prominent Role of Cyrillian Christology in Fifteenth Century Ethiopia," *Polyvocia SOAS Journal of Graduate Research*, 4, (2012): 25. https//cedep.acadenia.edu/JacopoGnisci. (last accessed, August, 2016).

[69] Uqbit Tesfazghi, *Current Christological Positions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Theologians, Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 195 (Rome, 1973), 112.

[70] *ሃይማኖተ፡ አበው፡ ቀደምት።*, *La Foi des Pères Anciens*, ed. Berhanu Abebbe. (Stuttgart, 1986).

[71] Ibid.

[72] *ሃይማኖተ፡ አበው፡ ቀደምት።*, *La Foi des Pères Anciens*, 61.

[73] Admittedly, he quotes *Abba* Giyorgis but to bring out a mistake or two he made, *ሃይማኖተ፡ አበው፡ ቀደምት።*, *La Foi des Pères Anciens*, 72-3.

[74] Chr. Dillmann, Fr. Augusti, *Lexicon Linguae Aethiopicae*, 1865, Reprint (Osnabrück 1970), 1233.

[75] KWK = ደስታ፡ ተክለ፡ ወልድ፤ ፤ መጽሐፈ፡ ሰዋስው፡ ወግስ፡ ወመዝገበ፡ ቃላት፡ሐዲስ።, 493.

Ayyälä, it is not anathema to speak of two natures after union but for Ayyalew and all followers of Saints Athanasius, Cyril and Dioscorus, like the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church, it is.

Interestingly, Kidanä Wäld Kəfle claims that he is a member of the authentic Orthodox Church of Ethiopia, and never refers to the Council of Chalcedon in any negative way, but there is no hint in his book that he disavows its decisions. His writings reflect his desire to remain a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, of the Monastery of Däbrä Libanos, being a Catholic in faith. But he was, like his teacher, Kəflä Giyorgis, who gave us a translation of Dillmann's Gə´əz-Latin dictionary,[76] a committed Catholic.[77] It should not be surprising that his *"Haymanotä Abäw"* was published posthumously, outside Ethiopia, and after the death of Emperor Haile Selassie—then Crown Prince Tafari Makonnen—who believed he was of the *täwaḥədo* faith when he invited him from Jerusalem to write the commentary on Ezekiel.[78]

The right and positive approach for these converts would have been to state that they left Alexandria and went to Rome because the faith of the latter appealed to their intellect—if that is, indeed, the reason—more than to justify their defection by vilifying the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church. Let us say, for the sake of argument, that the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church left Rome and went to Alexandria. Would this make her more disloyal than they are?

*What the Future Should Hold*

It is in the opinion of this writer that, after studying the sources, the schism at the Council of Chalcedon was caused by the burgeoning weeds of a series of misunderstandings that the enemy sowed in the farm of the Universal Church.[79] The weeds have grown together with the wheat during many winters. It is now time for farsighted farmers and peace-making shepherds to wake up and cleanse the field (Mt. 13:24-30).

What happened at the Council of Chalcedon was a tragedy that calls for courageous Church leaders to objectively and amicably re-examine the process and the events that led to the schism, with the ultimate purpose of correcting the misunderstandings and removing the animosity that prevailed at the Council and long after it. First of all, Patriarch Dioscorus was not given a chance to declare his Orthodox faith. He was accused of heresy not due to his faith but because of his attitude toward the Roman Pope. As the local sources have it, "Our father Dioscorus excommunicated Eutyches and cursed all those who mingled the

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[76] The translation was published by Dässəta Täklä Wäld. See KWK (1948) = = ደስታ፡ ተክለ፡ ወልድ፤ ፤ መጽሐፈ፡ ሰዋስው፡ ወግስ፡ ወመዝገበ፡ ቃላት፡ሐዲስ። .

[77] Beyene Yaqob, *L'Unzione di Cristo nella teologia Etiopica. Contributo di ricerca su nuovi documenti etiopici inediti*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 215 (Rome, 1981), 50-211.

[78] Yimam Baye, "Kidanä Wäld Kəfle," *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, 3 (2007): 339

[79] Evagrius, a sixth century Melkite Syrian writer is quoted as having said, "the device of the envious and God-hating demon," W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1972), 4, fn. 5.

Godhead of Christ with his incarnation".[80] It might be argued that he did not excommunicate Eutyches or cursed him or he might have kept silent, at that time. The sequence should be irrelevant if this is how the Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox Churches remember him today. The first business of the Council was to disgrace the head of a great Church of Alexandria with some flimsy accusations by the Pope's legates who threatened to boycott the meeting if their demand was not met. Therefore, it can be argued that the Council of Chalcedon was held to codify the definition of faith (the *Tome*) of Pope Leo, not of the Council, because "every resolution of the synod to which [the Pope's legates] did not assent was null and void".[81] "Only two years before at a Synod held at Ephesus in August 449 many of these same bishops had howled down any suggestion that Christ existed 'in two natures' after the Incarnation. The formula, however, was known to correspond to the will of the Emperor supported both by the papal legates and the lay presidents of the Synod. It therefore carried the day".[82]

The Council at Chalcedon was summoned to deal with Eutyches's heresy that there is only one nature (divine) in Christ. But it contracted a diversion early on and drifted to resurrecting Nestorius's heresy that Christ is in two natures (divine and human), each acting separately according to its nature, and to reexamining or changing Cyril's teaching that Christ is from two united natures acting as one at all events. One can see that the Pope's legates were here to assert the supremacy of Rome threatened by Alexandria with the unparalleled intellectual ability of its leaders.

Nevertheless, the political feud and wrangling at the opening session notwithstanding, the discussions of the issue at hand had gone relatively well, until the letter of Pope Leo, which had some expressions that could be interpreted as sneaking in Nestorianism, was read.[83] Why the Pope, who claimed to preside over a synod through his legates with a veto power, fell into such a pitfall of serious consequences is a puzzle—especially when considering the fact that the synod began its deliberations by giving tribute to the preceding Councils and invoking the name of St. Cyril of Alexandria (in connection with his letter to Nestorius) as the pillar of Orthodoxy. Since only few dared to challenge the words of the Pope, it was somehow made to reconcile with expressions made by Saint Cyril.

As a result, the preferred Orthodox Greek phrase that would have avoided the schism, ἐκ δύο φύσεων ("from two natures"), was changed to mean

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[80] Synaxary, 23 Nähse, see up.

[81] Charles Joseph Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils, from the Original Documents* (translated from the German, *Conciliengeschichte*), 1 (1894), 2 (1896), 3 (1883), 4 (1896), and 5 (1896), here at 3, 297.

[82] W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries.* (Cambridge, 1972), here at 4: "At Ephesus the bishops had cried out, 'If anyone says "two" (natures), let him be anathema'" fn. 4.

[83] Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, 3, 317-9.

in Latin to "*in* [i.e. ἐν] *duabus naturis*" ("in two natures"), obviously to accommodate the untouchable error in the *Tome* by the infallible Pope.[84]

Nevertheless, there is hope of rectifying the unfortunate schism. The decision of the Council cannot be considered totally unorthodox, when compared, with the best of intentions, to what the Church's sources preserve:

> Following, therefore, the holy Fathers, we all teach with one accord one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, perfect in His Godhead and perfect in His manhood, true God and true man, consisting of a reasonable soul and of a body, of one substance with the Father as touching the Godhead, and of one substance with us as touching the manhood, like unto us in everything, sin excepted, according to the Godhead begotten of the Father before all time, but in the last days, for us men and for our salvation, according to the manhood, born of the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord,- only-begotten, confessed [in/out of] two natures, without confusion, without change, without rending or separation; while the difference of the natures is in no way denied by reason of the union; on the other hand, the peculiarity of each nature is preserved, and both concur in one Person and Hypostasis. We do not confess One separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-Begotten and God the Logos, the Lord Jesus Christ.[85]

Attempts by the Catholic Church to convince the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to come back to it, bringing evidence that the Catholic faith is right and that of Ethiopia is heretical, and that the Ethiopian Christian kingdom is in desperate need of help, has been going on at every occasion and has to stop. It is futile, as no Church considers admitting that its forefathers were wrong after upholding their faith dearly over a millennium and half years. The only way out of the box is to allow both the Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians to keep their respective formula of faith as received from their fathers and treat the two formulae—"in two natures" and "from two natures"—as synonyms with one meaning.[86] Sellers's interpretation might be helpful:

> But a major question is this: Did the Council of Chalcedon accept the laudable contribution of the Alexandrian school of theology to the doctrine of the one person of Jesus Christ? The defenders of Chalcedon in the following century certainly thought so, and it is only reasonable to conclude that the bishops at the Council did not consider that in accepting the *Definitio* they were being compelled to reject formulas with which for so long the East had been familiar. What Chalcedon did was to exclude any false interpretation of the Alexandrian formulas, but not the formulas themselves, provided these were rightly understood. After all, the Council could hardly have condemned the use of the "one incarnate nature", seeing that, as was then believed, it had been handed down by Athanasius himself. And in regard to the

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[84] Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, 3, 348; Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Helmut Hoping, Peter Hünermann et al. (San Francisco, 2012), 109, note; R. V. Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon. A Historical and Doctrinal Survey* (London, 1953), 120-1, n. 6.

[85] Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils* 3, 348-349; Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. 2 (Atlanta, 1987), 3; Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon*, 210-211; Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Helmut Hoping, Peter Hünermann et al. (San Francisco, 2012), 109-110.

[86] This proposal might be new but the idea is not. It has already been claimed that "The meaning, moreover, they say, of ἐκ and ἐν is essentially the same, and the one and the other alike excluded Monophysitim", Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils*, 3, 349, note. The concern of the non-Chalcedonians is actually whether or not this ἐν excluded Dyophysitism.

> 'hypostatic union', this was clearly received; for it occurs three times in Cyril's Second Letter to Nestorius, which was one of the documents accepted as *de fide*.[87]

All these lead us to believe that to give the two formulae one meaning does not look impossible, even if this is a major historical concession and compromise on the part of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Whatever happened at Chalcedon and after Chalcedon, both groups accept Jesus Christ as both the perfect God and perfect man. A perfect man cannot do what God does, but Christ the perfect man did and still does; and the perfect God is immortal, but Christ, the perfect God, died in the flesh. What matters should be the doctrine, not the formulation. It should be clear at the outset that the Ethiopian Orthodox Church will not and should not associate itself with any Church that does not subscribe to this definition of faith. But the hope to end the schism is in the process of being materialized, thanks to the initiatives taken by Churches, the World Council of Churches, and the dedication to it by others.[88]

Several hope-inspiring inter and intra group consultations have taken place.[89] The statement by the Oriental Orthodox Churches, whose heads met in Addis Ababa on 7-14 January, 1967, testifies that they have felt the urgent need to remove all and any hurdles that stand in the way of unity, in a different and constructive approach:

> Though in our concern for the union of Christendom we have in our minds the reunion of all Churches, from the point of view of closer affinity in faith and spiritual kinship with us we need to develop different approaches in our relationship with them. This consideration leads us to take up the question of our relation with the Eastern Orthodox Churches as a first step. We shared the same faith and communion until the Council of Chalcedon in 451, and then the division took place.
>
> Concerning the Christological controversy which caused the division, we hope that common studies in the spirit of mutual understanding can shed light on our understanding of each other's position. So we have decided that we should institute formally a fresh study of the Christological doctrine in its historical setting to be undertaken by our scholars, taking into account the earlier studies on this subject as well as the informal consultations held in connection with the meetings of the meetings of the World Council of Churches. Meanwhile, we express our agreement that our Churches could seek a closer relationship and cooperate with the Eastern Orthodox Churches in practical affairs.[90]

Chaillot's *Towards Unity*, an indispensable source from which the above information is taken, details the historical developments towards materializing the suggestions contained in the declaration and contains valuable documents that testify that the hoped for unity is in sight even if it is not in hand. On the historical side, the comprehensive and informative review was compiled by Metropolitan Damaskinos, quoted above. Of the utmost importance is the Joint Declaration of the Patriarchs of the Middle East St Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 16-19 November 1987. The Joint Declaration includes this historical statement:

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[87] Sellers, *The Council of Chalcedon*, 213.

[88] *Towards Unity*.

[89] See the review by Metropolitan Damaskinos, in *Towards Unity*, 30-4.

[90] *Towards Unity*, 35.

> While reflecting once more on the deeply-rooted inner unity of faith existing between our two families of Churches, we rejoice in realizing how much we have advanced in our discovery and in the growing consciousness among our people of that inner unity of Faith in the Incarnate Lord.
>
> Attempts by theologians of both families aimed at overcoming the misunderstandings inherited from the past centuries of alienation towards one another have happily reached the same conclusion that fundamentally and essentially we, on both sides, have preserved the same Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of diverse formulations and resulting controversies.[91]

On the basis of the declarations of 1989 and 1990, in 1990 the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church has accepted a suggestion of considering the lifting of the anathemas to take place simultaneously.[92]

[91] *Towards Unity*, 36.

[92] *Towards Unity*, 39.

# Christology in the Divine Liturgies, Prayers, and Hymns of the Coptic Orthodox Church

*Donna Rizk*

> "To affirm that liturgy is the source *par excellence* of theology does not mean, as some seem to think, a reduction of theology to liturgy... all theology, indeed, out to be 'liturgical', yet not in the sense of having liturgy as its unique 'object' of study, but in that of having its unique term of reference in the faith of the Church as manifested and communicated in the liturgy..." [1]

Christology has often been a major point of historical debate and sharp disagreement among the Churches of the Orient. Since the Council of Chalcedon (451), the Churches of the East officially separated mainly over distinctive explanations and terminologies on the person of Christ, although political and other motivations were also the cause of the schism.[2] Gradually over time, liturgical affinity between the two Orthodox families (also known as the Eastern and Oriental Churches today) has sometimes disintegrated and mutual theological understanding has been misconstrued over the centuries.

Nevertheless, it is without doubt that the Eastern and Oriental Churches have in common a great number of Orthodox prayers and hymns, whether they are Eucharistic, canonical, hymnal prayers: in fact, more common texts are shared than not. Some of these living texts are identical and others have their similarities through various historical and theological developments, and each one of these accounts reflect a living theology manifested through prayer in the life of the Church. For example, many liturgical similarities are found among liturgical texts and rubrics, especially between the Coptic Orthodox Church and Byzantine Church which have been demonstrated by scholars and liturgists.[3]

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[1] Alexander Schmemann, *Liturgy and Traditions: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemann* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 61.

[2] Although the schism officially took place at Chalcedon, tensions between the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Rome, and Constantinople existed prior to the Council. For more information on the build up to the Council of 451, see introduction of Michael Gaddis and Richard Price, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, Vol. 1, eds. Michael Gaddis and Richard Price (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press 2005), and John Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church 450-680 AD (The Church in History Series vol. II)* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989).

[3] See for example O.H. E. Burmester's works, "The Office of Genuflexion of Whitsunday," *Le Muséon*, Tome 47 (1934): 205-57, "The Greek Kirugmata, Versicles and Responses, and Hymns in the Coptic Liturgy," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 2 (1936): 363-394, "The Coptic-Greek-Arabic Holy Week Lectionary of Scetis," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 16 (1961-62): 83-137, and "Horologion copte et vêpres byzantines," *Le Muséon* 102/3-4 (1989): 237-254.

Liturgical historians often will state that the rule of prayer is the rule of faith (*lex orandi, lex credendi*), meaning that *what* one prays reveals *what* one believes. Father Alexander Schmemann, Russian Orthodox theologian from the 20th century affirms this when he concludes that

> (…) liturgical theology must always draw its conclusions from the concrete data of the living tradition of worship, from the liturgical facts.[4]

He elsewhere states that all theology "out to be liturgical" as such that the "reference in the faith of the Church [is] as manifested and communicated in the liturgy".[5] And it is no surprise when speaking about liturgical theology in his book, *Coptic Christology*, Stephen Davis goes even further and states that even from ancient times the divine service of the Church of Alexandria "served as a ritual context for the articulation of Christological doctrine".[6] Thus, the liturgy of the Church of Alexandria has for many centuries revealed and declared her Christology through her liturgical prayers.

It is through this understanding of the living Church, this *lex orandi-lex credendi* that I wish to elucidate Coptic Christology in hopes to demonstrate that the Copts, in continuity with the Apostolic faith, without fail has believed and continues to believe in the full divinity and full humanity of the incarnate Logos as expressed in her worship. Thus, the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria blatantly rejects the belief of monophystism.

As it is not possible to cover the entire oeuvre of Coptic liturgical prayers and services here, I have chosen the below texts that I believe most exemplifies Coptic Christology to show it is the God-man that we profess and it is the God-man we believe and worship, in perfect union without confusion, separation, or mingling.

## *1. The Three Coptic Divine Liturgies: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzus, and Cyril of Alexandria*

### *1a. The Liturgy of St. Basil* [7]

In the Coptic Church today, three divine liturgies are used: St. Basil, St. Gregory (the Theologian or Nazianzus) and St. Cyril of Alexandria (a developed liturgy of St. Mark).[8] The Liturgy of St. Basil (henceforth called *Egyptian* Basil) is

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[4] Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 40.

[5] Alexander Schmemann, *Liturgy and Traditions: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemann* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 61.

[6] Stephen Davis, *Coptic Christology in Practice: Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008), 87. In Chapter 2 entitled "Christology in Coptic Eucharistic Liturgies," 86-100, Davis attempts to analyse how incarnational Christology was "re-enacted" in ritual and liturgical settings in the Coptic Church.

[7] All the following texts quoted from the Liturgy of St. Basil are taken from the second edition of the book of service of *The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, Gregory and Cyril* (Los Angeles, 2007), 101-252, printed by the Coptic Orthodox Dioceses of Los Angeles and the Southern States.

[8] Patriarch Gabriel II (1131-1145) mandated in his canon 26 that these liturgies can only be used in the Church, however its execution probably came into practice later. The canon reads, "It has reached

attributed to Basil himself.[9] It is the most commonly used liturgy throughout the year in the Coptic Church. *Egyptian* Basil in the extant Boharic Coptic text is longer than the Basilian liturgy in the Armenian, Byzantine, and Syriac traditions and some scholars state that this extended version was done by Basil himself while in Egypt.[10] Although the Liturgy of Basil is also used in the Eastern Churches on a number of occasions,[11] the current text of the Liturgy of St. Basil (*Egyptian* Basil) differs from that of the Liturgy of St. Basil in the Eastern tradition.[12] Nonetheless, both liturgies that bear Basil's name do contain a number of shared or parallel prayers.[13]

The *Egyptian* Basil in its current form has a number of Christological texts that manifest Coptic Christology. The Anaphora of Basil gives a brief account of the creation account and man falling away from God, and then speaks about the purpose of Christ's incarnation. Thus Christ

> was incarnate and became man, and taught us the ways of salvation. He granted us the birth from on high through water and Spirit.[14]

This prayer shows it was the eternal Logos who came from the Father and "became man" and brought man a new birth from "water and Spirit" and sanctified humanity through his birth.

Following the Anaphora, the Institutive Narrative is said, in which the celebrant reenacts and recites the words of institution of Christ at the Last Supper:

> He broke it, and gave it to His own saintly disciples and holy apostles, saying, 'Take, eat of it, all of you. For this is my body, which is broken for you and for many, to be given for the remission of sins, do this in remembrance of me'.[15]

It is his real body that is "broken" for the "remission of sins".

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my feebleness that certain people in the province of the Sa'id celebrate liturgies not in conformity with, and otherwise than the three known ones which are the Liturgy of Saint Basil, and that of Saint Gregory, and the Liturgy of Saint Cyril. I have forbidden anyone to act deliberately thus (...)" See O. H. E. Burmester, "The Canons of Gabriel Ibn Turaik," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935), 41.

[9] See John R. K. Fenwick, *The Anaphoras of St. Basil and St. James*: Ch. 3 St. Basil and the Origins of the Anaphoras Bearing His Name (Rome: Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, 1992), 19.

[10] Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2002), 106.

[11] St. Basil's liturgy as it is in the Eastern Orthodox tradition is usually celebrated ten times in the year. See Greek Orthodox Diocese of America (2014), *The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil* [Online] available from: http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/basil#divine [Accessed September 23, 2014].

[12] Manel Ni, *History of the Liturgies* in *Handbook of Liturgical Studies*, Anscar Chupungoco, ed. (Collegeville, 1997), 119. Ni highlights that the non-Chalcedonian Churches developed their own liturgical rite apart from Byzantium since they were not officially in communion with the Eastern Church and did not have to adapt to the Empire's liturgical developments and mandates. For a more comprehensive study of the different liturgical traditions of St. Basil, see Achim Budde, *Die Ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora: Text, Kommentar, Geschichte* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2004).

[13] A. Budde, *Die Ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora*, 94-106.

[14] *The Divine Liturgy*, 189-90.

[15] Ibid., 192-3.

The last prayer in Basil's liturgy is the *Confessional* prayer said by the celebrant right before the distribution of communion. In this prayer, the celebrant confesses that before him on the altar is the real body and blood of Christ: he united his divinity with his body that he took from the Theotokos perfectly:

> Amen. Amen. Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and confess to the last breath, that this is the life-giving flesh that your only-begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ took from our Lady, the Lady of us all, the holy Theotokos Saint Mary. He made it one with his divinity without mingling, without confusion and without alteration. He confessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate. He gave it up for us upon the holy wood of the cross of his own will for us all. Truly, I believe that his divinity parted not from his humanity for a single moment nor a twinkling of an eye. Given for us for salvation, remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of him. I believe, I believe, I believe that this is true. Amen.[16]

This profound Christological statement about the unity of Christ's divinity with his humanity ("without mingling, without confusion and without alteration") has distinctive parallels with the *Definition of Faith* produced at the Council of Chalcedon. This statement from the council speaks about Christ "in two natures" (a Christological expression rejected by Orientalists for fear of being Nestorian) who is one "without confusion, change, division, or separation (...) not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, Only-begotten Word (...)"[17] This confessional prayer not only eradicates the heresies of monophysitism, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, but it also uniquely shows both Christological forms of Orthodoxy—miaphysitism and dyiaphysitism. When the celebrant states it is Christ who took flesh from the Theotokos and made it "one with his divinity", he declares a clear miaphysite Christology, revealing that the Logos, the "only-begotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ", took flesh from the Theotokos and his flesh thus is life-giving. Diaphysite Christology is seen from the latter statement regarding the union of Christ when the celebrant declares, "his divinity parted not from his humanity", a phrase that contains language of two natures—that is, divinity (Coptic: ⲧⲉϥⲙⲉⲑⲛⲟⲩⲧ) and humanity (ⲉⲧⲉϥⲙⲉⲧⲣⲱⲙⲓ).[18]

After this prayer, the deacon affirms this confession and Christology and responds in the name of the faithful saying, "Amen. Amen. Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe that this is true".[19] And then the distribution of the holy Eucharist takes place.

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[16] Ibid., 233-4.

[17] Michael Gaddis and Richard Price, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon: Vol. 1* (Liverpool, 2007), 59. This definition is found in Session 5.34 of the Council. It is also worthy to note that in the *Acts* the Egyptian bishops ardently refused to divide Christ after the union: "The most devout Egyptian bishops and those with them exclaimed, 'Do not divide the Lord of glory. Do not divide the indivisible,'" (Ibid., 160).

[18] Although the statement can be understood that after the union he is "one" and his divinity and humanity never are spoken inseparably after the union, the Coptic text nevertheless indicates two natures—divinity and humanity. However, both divinity and humanity never parted as is also understood in diaphysite Christology, but co-existed "without mingling, without confusion, without alteration".

[19] *Divine Liturgy of St. Basil* (2007), 234.

*1b. The Coptic Liturgy According to St. Gregory the Theologian*[20]

The liturgy that is attributed to St. Gregory Nazianzus (also known as St. Gregory the Theologian) is used normally during feasts, however it can be used freely during any liturgical celebration.[21]

This liturgy is unique in that it addresses Christ in the second person, whereas the other two liturgies generally address the Father and refer to Christ in the third person. In Gregory's liturgy there are found numerous examples that reflect a miaphysite Christology and many that are similar to Basil's. Thus, in order to evade redundancy, I have chosen the below key phrases that manifest a clear Christology of Christ's perfect union.

In the Coptic Book of Divine liturgies, this liturgy begins with the Prayer of Reconciliation and in this prayer the celebrant declares Christ's incarnation as the modes of reconciling the "earthly with the heavenly", fulfilling the economy (salvation) of man in Christ's flesh:

> (…) but you, without change, were incarnate and became man, and resembled us in everything, except for sin alone (…) you have reconciled the earthly with the heavenly and made the two into one and fulfilled the economy in the flesh.[22]

In the Anaphora, the text again confesses Christ's incarnation in which he "took the form of a servant" (a clear reference from Phil. 2:6-11) and blessed our nature in himself, expressing a deification theology:

> You, the infinite, being God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied yourself and took the form of a servant and blessed my nature in yourself and fulfilled your Law on my behalf (…) you have abolished sin in the flesh.[23]

It is only through God taking flesh that he abolished sin in his flesh. Such a bold Christological statement repudiates the heresy of monophysitism where the language emphasizes the Logos becoming human; it is Christ who "emptied" himself, "took the form of a bondservant", and "blessed my nature" in himself—that is in his human flesh. Thus, if Christ was absolutely one nature and his full humanity was dissolved or consumed by his divinity, or if he did not fully assume a human body (one divine nature as in the belief of real monophysitism), then the "abolition of sin in the flesh" through his flesh would not be possible.

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[20] The following texts quoted from the Liturgy of St. Gregory are also taken from the second edition of the book of service of the *Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, Gregory and Cyril* (Los Angeles, 2007), 253-320.

[21] It is not clear when Gregory's liturgy became integrated into the Coptic rite, however, as Davis notes the earliest manuscript evidence for Gregory's liturgy is in Sahidic Coptic and dates to the ninth or tenth century. (Davis, *Coptic Christology*, 96) Also see Hans Lietzmann, 'Sahidische Bruchstücke der Gregorios-und Kyrillos liturgie', in *Kleine Schriften: Vol III* (Berlin, 1962), 99-117. In the Eastern tradition, the Liturgy of Gregory is rarely used and is not officially part of the Byzantine rite. See Christopher Tsichlis, "The Divine Liturgy of Our Father Among the Saints, Gregory the Theologian" (Master Thesis, Boston College, 2008).

[22] *Divine Liturgy* (2007), 257-8.

[23] Ibid., 274.

After the words of institution, the fraction is said, and this prayer again highlights that the union of Christ's divinity with humanity is found in the incarnation:

> O Logos who can be perceived and man who can be seen, who through your incomprehensible Incarnation have prepared for us the bread of heaven—this your Holy Body which is mystical and holy in every way.[24]

He truly is the divine Logos that can be "perceived" and man who "can be seen".

After the final confession, the celebrant prays an inaudible prayer that is heavily immersed with Christology:

> O You, the Being, who was, who came, and who is coming again. Who was incarnate and became man and was crucified for us on the cross, who suffered by His will in the flesh *but suffered not in His divinity*,[25] who was buried and put in the tomb, and on the third day rose from the dead (…)[26]

The text clearly reveals Christ as being divine ("who was, who came and who is coming again") and human ("was incarnate and became man"). Also, monophysitism is repudiated by this phrase since Christ's flesh suffered and not his divinity, revealing two natures exist in their union, but his divinity did not consume or overpower his humanity.

### *1c. Liturgy of St. Cyril of Alexandria*[27]

The liturgy that is attributed to St. Cyril of Alexandria is a longer rendition of what is known as the liturgy of St. Mark, attributed to the first overseer of the See of Alexandria.[28] The liturgy today is typically used infrequently throughout the ecclesiastical year and is usually prayed during periods of fasting, especially Great Lent.

Since Cyril's liturgy (in its current form) has many parallel prayers to that of Basil, I have chosen just two excerpts that I believe reveal Coptic Christology in practice. The first is from the Institutive Narrative, which again shows Christ's willingness to suffer till death in the body:

> (…) the night in which he was about to give himself up to suffer for our sins and to death, which he accepted by his own will for us all.[29]

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[24] Ibid., 308.

[25] My emphasis.

[26] Ibid., 322.

[27] The following texts quoted from the Liturgy of St. Cyril are again taken from the second edition of the book of service of *The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, Gregory and Cyril* (Los Angeles, 2007), 320-412.

[28] Patristic writers such as Clement of Alexandria and other historians attribute the apostle as the founder of Christianity in Egypt (60-68 AD) and having written his liturgy during that time. See Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1993), 64. Also see Fr. Tadros Malaty, *Introduction to the Coptic Church* (Alexandria: St. George's Coptic Church Sporting, 1993). The oldest text extant of the liturgy of St. Mark is found in a thirteenth century Coptic-Arabic manuscript. See F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western: Being the Texts Originals or Translated of the Principals Liturgies of the Church* (Oxford: Chalcedon Press 1896), 112.

[29] *The Divine Liturgy*, 379-380.

The second excerpt is an inaudible prayer said after the fraction, affirming again it is Christ who "suffered in the flesh" and was made victorious:

> (...) for the sake of him who suffered in the flesh on our behalf and established the victory of the cross (...)[30]

*2. The Fractions (Seasonal and Annual)*[31]

The *Fractions* in the Coptic rite are said when the celebrant methodologically breaks the bread during the liturgy before its distribution. Below are a few excerpts that can be used at certain ecclesiastical periods of the year.

*2a. Fraction to the Son for the Feasts of the Lord*[32]

This fraction is prayed on any of the seven major or seven minor feasts of the Lord according to the Coptic calendar. It consists mainly of a summary of Christ's life while on earth, from his incarnation from the Virgin until his ascension and sending of the Holy Spirit. Both his humanity and divinity are clearly represented throughout this fraction; below is an excerpt that speaks about his growth as a human while being God:

> We praise and glorify the God of gods and the Lord of lords, who was incarnate of Saint Mary (…) who grew little by little, according to the form of men (ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲡⲉⲓⲙⲟⲧ ⲛ̀ⲛⲓⲣⲱⲙⲓ), yet he alone was without sin.[33]

*2b. Fraction to the Son for the Holy Fast of the Forty Days*[34]

This fraction is one of two general fractions that can be prayed during Great Lent. The fraction states Christ is the "Redeemer of everyone, who was incarnate for our salvation"[35]—again speaking about Christ being divine as "Redeemer" and human when he became "incarnate". This prayer again highlights Christ's humanity ardently.

*2c. Fraction to the Son for the Resurrection*[36]

This fraction is prayed during the feast of the Resurrection, and expectedly speaks about Christ's resurrection, but its underlining theme is incarnational. The prayer begins by explaining who God is, in an cataphatic way: "O Christ our God, the High Priest (...) the Immortal, Everlasting, the Logos of God who is above all (...)"[37]

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[30] Ibid., 399.

[31] All the fractions are taken from the second edition of the book of service of the *Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, Gregory and Cyril* (Los Angeles, 2007), 413-474.

[32] Ibid., 417-419.

[33] Ibid., 417.

[34] Ibid., 427-428.

[35] Ibid., 427.

[36] Ibid., 440-441.

[37] Ibid., 440.

Following this, the prayer declares Christ's uniting of his divinity with the humanity that he took from Saint Mary:

> This is the body, which He took from our Lady, the Lady of us all, Saint Mary, and made it one with His divinity.[38]

Afterwards the prayer declares Christ's descent into Hades, how he saved those who were alive and reposed the dead "through his tasting of death for us".[39] Only by taking human flesh that is capable of death the Logos of God is able to die, and consequently, he gives humanity the "light of his resurrection through his holy incarnation",[40] again another declaration that salvation was given through him taking flesh.

*2d. A Fraction to the Son*[41]

Another fraction that is addressed to the Son is the *Fraction to the Son*, which can be prayed during any season. This prayer also speaks in detail about Christ's life and mission during his time on earth and focuses on his willingness to become man for the sake of humanity's salvation. It depicts Christ in a very real human way, while being God—the "Eternal, everlasting before the ages (...) who is one with Father and the Holy Spirit (...)" and also chose to "suffer on behalf of sinners (...) who descended from the Father's bosom to the womb of the Virgin (...)"[42] Following this is a kenotic illustration of Christ (a reference from Phil 2:7-8), again underlining his humanity while being God:

> You emptied yourself, taking the form of a servant and walking upon the earth as a man. And this is the wonder of your humility.[43]

*2e. The Syrian Fraction for the Feasts of the Cross and Standard Days*[44]

This fraction is prayed during any of the three feasts of the cross in the Coptic Church. It is filled with profound Christological declarations, particularly about Christ's indivisible union:

> Thus truly the Logos of God suffered in the flesh, was slain, bowed on the cross, and his soul parted from his body, even though his divinity never parted, either from his soul or from his body (...) One is Emmanuel, who is indivisible after the union, and undivided into two natures (...)[45]

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[38] Ibid., 440.

[39] Ibid., 440.

[40] Ibid., 441.

[41] Ibid., 462-466.

[42] Ibid., 462.

[43] Ibid., 462.

[44] Ibid., 472-4.

[45] Ibid., 472-3. This excerpt has clear parallels again to that of the *Definition of Faith* produced at the Council of Chalcedon, emphasizing the union of the natures of Christ that were not divided after his incarnation.

*3. Hymnology*

*3a. The Trisagion*

The Trisagion (henceforth called the *Christo*-Trisagion[46]) is said on several accounts in the Coptic Church. The hymn in the Oriental Orthodox Churches today address this hymn to Christ, rather than the Trinity as it is sung in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. I will not cover the history or theological implications of the development of this hymn as it has been covered elsewhere.[47] The text is as follows:

> Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, who was born of the Virgin, have mercy on us. Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, who was crucified for us, have mercy on us.
> Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, who rose from the dead and ascended into the heavens, have mercy on us.
> Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of the ages. Amen.
> O holy Trinity, have mercy upon us.

*3b. Midnight Psalmody*[48]

The use of Psalmody as hymnology is an ancient practice, dating back to the fourth century in early monastic circles.[49] All the Theotokia in the Coptic Psalmody speak about the incarnation and give many examples of Orthodox Christology of Christ's birth from the Virgin, who is fully man and fully God. I will focus on the Theotokia that demonstrate such examples by each day.

*The Sunday Theotokia* typifies the Ark of the Covenant with the womb of the Mother of God. In her womb, Christ was incarnate "one nature out of two" and united His flesh *hypostatically*:

> The ark overlaid roundabout with gold that was made with wood that would not decay. It foretold the sign of God the Word who became man without separation. One nature out of two (**Ⲟⲩⲁⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲉⲛ Ⲃ̅**), a holy divinity, co-essential with the Father, and incorruptible. A holy humanity, begotten without seed, co-essential with us (...) This which He has taken, from you O undefiled, He made it one with Him hypostatically (**ⲟⲩⲥⲩⲡⲟⲥⲧⲁⲥⲓⲥ**). [50]

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[46] My own coined term.

[47] Donna Rizk, *The Trisagion: a Chalcedonian or non-Chalcedonian Approach?* Presented at the proceedings of the *Coptic Symposium: Past, Present, and Future* (Stevenage, July 21-24, 2013), forthcoming (The Alexandria School Journal), 2017.

[48] All the following texts quoted from the Midnight Psalmody are taken from the book of service of *The Holy Psalmody* (Ridgewood, 2004), printed by Saint Mary and Saint Antonios Coptic Orthodox Church, Ridgewood, NY.

[49] See De Lacy O'Leary, *The Daily Office and Theotokia of the Coptic Church* (London, 1911), especially 28-40.

[50] Ibid., 88-9; my English translation. A similar statement is also said for the Psali for the Feast of the Annunciation, which highlights that it was one of the Trinity who took flesh: "O Christ the Eternal One who has shone today in the womb of Mary... One from the Holy Trinity was incarnate today (**Ⲡⲓⲟⲩⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲉⲛ ⲧ̀ⲧⲣⲓⲁⲥ ⲉⲑⲃ̅ ⲁⲫⲃⲓⲥⲁⲣⲝ**) (...)" See 488-492.

The Psalmody continues to say that in Mary's womb was the "manna that came from the Father",[51] who is the "invisible Word of the Father".[52] And this same Word took flesh from her "in an indescribable unity".[53]

This day also focuses on the unchanging nature of God when he took flesh; he was incarnate of Mary "without change",[54] he "took our likeness without change",[55] and is "true God out of true God who was incarnate of you without change".[56]

The *Monday Theotokia* speaks mainly about Adam's sin and consequently Christ's purpose of his incarnation. In the refrain, it states Christ appeared in the flesh to save us, where he "took flesh and dwelt in us (...) to redeem us".[57] He also became a "perfect man without change of his being or mingling or separation of any kind after the unity" [58] a similar Christological statement from those of Sunday. The following verse elucidates Christology ardently concerning the unity of Christ after the Incarnation:

> "But He is of one nature, one *hypostasis* and one Person, God the Word[59] (ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲟⲩⲫⲩⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲟⲩⲍⲩⲡⲟⲥⲧⲁⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲟⲩⲡ̀ⲣⲟⲥⲱⲡⲟⲛ ⲛ̀ⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲫⲏ ⲡⲓⲗⲟⲅⲟⲥ).

He united his flesh in one *hypostasis*, being both fully man and fully God.

In the *Tuesday Theotokia*, the day mainly focuses on Christ entering into the womb of the Virgin for man's salvation. This day also explicates that Christ was still God even after he became a man,[60] and declares that the body he took was perfect and had a rational soul:

> He took flesh from you without change, a rational body. Co-essential with us (ⲛ̀ⲟⲙⲟⲟⲩⲥⲓⲟⲥ ⲛⲉⲙⲁⲛ), perfect, and also who has a rational soul. He remained God as He is and became a perfect man.[61]

Besides emphasizing on Christ's human body, the Theotokia of this day does not undermine the power of Christ's divinity as being God; when he came and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin, the "fire of his divinity did not burn" her body. [62] Thus, if Christ's divinity did not consume his mother's humanity, nor would his divinity consume or overpower his own humanity as is believed in the case of the monophysite heresy.

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[51] Ibid., 94.

[52] Ibid., 98.

[53] Ibid., 106.

[54] Ibid., 85.

[55] Ibid., 92.

[56] Ibid., 95.

[57] Ibid., 138-9.

[58] Ibid., 141-2.

[59] Ibid., 142.

[60] Ibid., 154. In the Doxology of the Eve of Christmas (Paramone) a similar phrase is found, "Today all creation saw a great illuminating light because the Theophany was revealed unto us. For the One without flesh was incarnate like everyone, but he remained as God as well as man. (Ibid., 404)

[61] Ibid., 159-160. This statement also clearly refutes the Christological heresy of Apollinarianism, in which the heresy denies Christ having a human rational soul.

[62] Ibid., 156.

The *Wednesday Theotokia* focuses on Mary as being the bridal chamber and the dwelling place in which Christ came and took flesh from her. One particular stanza from this day manifests a clear Christology of God uniting with humanity from the "uniting place" of the Virgin's womb:

> Hail to the united place of the undivided natures (ϯⲙⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲓ ⲛ̀ⲁⲧⲫⲱⲣⲝ ⲛ̀ⲧⲉ ⲛⲓⲫⲩⲥⲓⲥ) that came together in one place without ever mingling. Hail to the bridal chamber, decorated in every way, for the true Bridegroom united with humanity.[63]

Two natures came together in unity (ϯⲙⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲓ) in that "united place" without mingling—such language resonates with that of the final confession from Coptic liturgy of Basil as well as Chalcedon's *Definition of Faith*, as mentioned earlier.

The *Thursday Theotokia* reiterates many previous Christological statements already said from Sunday to Wednesday. He was born bodily without change,[64] or alteration,[65] and became man like us except for sin only[66] while remaining as true God.[67] On Thursday it also highlights Christ's unity of two natures: "One nature out of two (**Ⲟⲩⲁⲓⲡⲉ ⲉ̀ⲃⲟⲗϩⲓⲛ ⲃ̅**), divinity and humanity".[68]

The *Friday Theotokia* is what I consider the Theotokia that focuses on a deified Christology. Christ deified humanity through his indwelling and humanity receives this grace of deification by uniting with him. The refrain for this day exemplifies this theology clearly: "He took what is ours and gave us what is His, we praise and glorify Him and exalt Him".[69] Throughout this day, Christ's work in and through humanity is highlighted; we are united with Him through His goodness,[70] He took our flesh and gave us His Holy Spirit and we are made one with Him.[71] Thus, through His incarnation, we have been given the exchange of Himself to us (deification): by Him taking what is "ours" and giving to us what is "His".

And finally, the *Saturday Theotokia* focuses on Mary as being the ever-Virgin and Mother of God who bore Emmanuel. This day also describes Christ's willingness to empty himself as a servant for the salvation of all,[72] illustrating his *kenosis*—becoming a man while still being God.

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[63] Ibid., 175.
[64] Ibid., 195.
[65] Ibid., 189.
[66] Ibid., 200.
[67] Ibid., 186-7.
[68] Ibid., 194.
[69] Ibid., 210.
[70] Ibid., 211.
[71] Ibid., 212; my English translation.
[72] Ibid., 227.

*3c. The Coptic Book of Hours*

The use of the Psalms in early Christian practice is an ancient practice attested by a number of early Church Fathers.[73] The Book of Hours in the Coptic rite consists mainly of seven hours for prayer: first, third, sixth, ninth, eleventh, twelfth, and midnight, with each hour containing a number of Psalms, a Gospel reading and three or six litanies.[74]

In the introduction of the first hour, the *faith of the Church* is said by the faithful and declares the belief of the Trinity:

> One is God the Father of everyone. One is his Son, Jesus Christ the Word, who took flesh and died and rose from the dead on the third day and raised us with him. One is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter (…)[75]

The ninth particularly highlights the humanity of Christ, in which this hour commemorates the death of Christ on the cross. The first litany states,

> O you who tasted death in the flesh in the ninth our for our sake, we the sinners put to death our carnal lusts, O Christ our God, and deliver us (…)[76]

Christ tasted death "in the flesh" for humanity's sake while on the cross, yet remained as God.

*3d. Holy Passion Week*

The rite of Passion Week (also known as *Pascha* Week) in the Coptic Church begins in the eve after the Feast of Palm Sunday and ends in the evening of the following Saturday, the Feast of the Holy Resurrection. Throughout the week of Pascha, the majority of Scriptural readings are prophetic which speak about the coming of Christ in the flesh. Since it would not be possible to cover here the entire oeuvre of Christo-centric scriptural passages, I will focus on the theology of some hymns chanted during Passion Week that exemplifies Coptic Christology.

On Holy Thursday (also called Maundy or Covenant Thursday), the Church commemorates the new covenant that Christ established by the offering of His body and blood as the fulfilment of the New Passover.

This special rite commemorates the act of Christ's great service of humility, obedience and discipleship. The unique prayers during this service address Christ as being the "first-born of all creation" (cf. Colossians 1:15), who "took on the form of a servant" and girded himself with a towel to wash the disciples' feet:

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[73] See De Lacy O'Leary, *The Daily Office and Theotokia of the Coptic Church* (London, 1911), especially 13-27.

[74] For more description see O.H.E. Burmester, *The Egyptian or Coptic Church: a Detailed Description of her Liturgical Services and the Rites and Ceremonies Observed in the Administration of her Sacramemts* (Cairo, 1967), esp. 96-99. Also for the current prayer book, see *Agpia: the Prayer Book of the Seven Canonical Hours* (Sydney, 2000).

[75] *Agpia* (2000), 7.

[76] Ibid., 72.

> Holy, holy, are you O Lord (…) You are the true, holy God, Jesus Christ, the first-born of all creation, who dwells in the glory of His majesty and in Him whom the fullness of the divinity dwells bodily. You did not consider it robbery to be equal with God your Father, but with your good will you came to earth, taking the form of a servant you became man in truth. You were incarnate in the undefiled womb of the Holy Theotokos, Saint Mary. You were clothed in purity and never sinned, and offered yourself up to the holy cross for our salvation. You gave us this example, for after supper you arose, took a towel and girded yourself (...)[77]

This particular prayer exemplifies Christ's *kenosis* in becoming man for the sake of man's salvation yet remained as God (cf. Philippians 2:6-11), in whom the "fullness of the divinity dwells bodily".

On Good Friday, the day consists of six canonical hours according to the rite of Pascha week, Old Testament and Gospel readings, and a number of Christological hymns. Every aspect of Good Friday highlights Christ's salvific work that He accomplished in the world as being fully man and fully divine. I will mention only two prominent Christological hymns that are sung on this day.

The first is the *Omonogenis* hymn (**Ⲟ ⲱⲙⲟⲅⲉⲛⲏⲥ**), which is commonly known to be sung annually during the sixth hour of Good Friday (although it is also chanted on three other occasions in the Coptic Church).[78] The text is word for word to that of the Ὁ Μονογενὴς hymn in the Eastern Church, however in the Coptic rite, a fusion of the *Christo-Trisagion* hymn is added at the end:

> Only begotten Son and Word of God, although immortal You humbled Yourself for our salvation, taking flesh from the holy Theotokos and ever Virgin Mary and, without change, becoming man. Christ, our God, You were crucified but conquered death by death. You are one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us.

(from here is the addition):

> Holy God, who being God, for our sake, became man without change.
> Holy Mighty, who by weakness showed forth what is greater than power.
> Holy Immortal, who was crucified for our sake, and endured death in his flesh, the Eternal and Immortal.
> O Holy Trinity have mercy on us.[79]

Each line of the extended hymn begins with the typical *Agios* (**Ⲁⲅⲓⲟⲥ**) and is followed by a Christological statement taken from Justinian's hymn. So for example, the first verse begins with "Holy God" and is followed by the statement, "who being man without change for us while remaining as God", an obvious borrowing from line 6 of *Omonogenis* that states Christ was "without change and became man" (ἀτρέπτως ἐνανθρωπήσας). The second verse continues, "Holy Mighty, who showed in weakness the greatness of power", affirming Christ as victor over death who "trampled death by death" as already said earlier. And the third line, "Holy Immortal, who was crucified for us, who through crucifixion received death while being in the flesh, and in death is eternal and immortal", declaring Christ's immortality yet simultaneously professing His

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[77] *Book of the Holy Pascha: From Last Friday of Great Lent to Resurrection Feast Liturgy* (Connecticut, 2010), 316.

[78] The other three times this hymn is sung is during the consecration for a patriarch, the consecration for the bishop, the consecration of the holy chrism, and on Good Friday.

[79] Book of the Holy Pascha, 402-3.

humanity since He endured "crucifixion and received death while being in the flesh". The hymn is concluded by a Trinitarian prayer, "*Holy Trinity have mercy on us"* as it similarly does in *Omonogenis* (τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, σῶσον ἡμᾶς).[80]

Another Christological hymn sung during the Good Friday service is entitled *Golgotha* (Ⲅⲟⲗⲅⲟⲑⲁ), also known as the "burial" hymn in the Coptic rite. This hymn exemplifies Christ as the God-man who was crucified in the flesh, who while being God died as man and was buried:

> Golgotha in Hebrew, kranion in Greek, the place where you were crucified, O Lord. You stretched out your hands, and two thieves were crucified with you; one on your right side, the other on your left, and you, O good Savior, in the midst.
>
> Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
>
> The right-hand thief cried out saying: Remember me, O my Lord, remember me, O my Savior, remember me, O my King, when you come into your Kingdom.
>
> The Lord answered him in a lowly voice saying: This day you will be with me in Paradise.
>
> The righteous Joseph and Nicodemus came took away the body of Christ, wrapped it in linen cloths with spices, and put it in a sepulcher and praised him saying, 'Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, who was crucified for us, have mercy on us.'
>
> We also worship him saying: 'Have mercy on us, O God our Savior, who was crucified on the cross, destroy Satan under our feet (…)[81]

Thus, one can see as I have demonstrated, that the Coptic Church exemplifies repeatedly and thoroughly through her liturgical prayers and hymns a very ardent and strong Christology regarding Christ's perfect union of His divinity with His humanity. It is through such prayers that the Coptic Church confesses, believes, and lives throughout her daily life.

[80] For more a thorough analysis on the comparison of the Omonogenis hymn in the Coptic and Byzantine rite, see my paper on The Omonogenis Hymn Shared in the Byzantine and Coptic Traditions, in the Proceedings of the Fifth International Congress of the Society of Oriental Liturgy, New York, June 10-14, 2014 (forthcoming 2016).

[81] *Book of the Holy Pascha*, 447-8.

# Christ in Syrian Orthodox Liturgy

*Fr. Baby Varghese*

In the Syrian Orthodox Church as in other Orthodox Churches, doctrine is inextricably bound up with liturgical action. In the context of the Christological controversies with the Byzantines, the Syrian Orthodox writers were interested more in the doctrine of the person and work of Christ. Thus, in their homilies, biblical and liturgical commentaries, as well as in theological treatises, they have carefully expounded and defended their Christology. This has left lasting marks on the liturgical texts. Prayers have either expounded or summarized the Syrian Orthodox Christology or even introduced the key concepts, Christological vocabulary and expressions, with the aim of imprinting the right faith onto the mind of the faithful.

Early Syriac Christology has been characterized by a "high Christology", in which a "maximalism" of the divine element in Christ is regularly found.[1] The liturgical expression of this Christology is attested in the Syriac *Didascalia*:

> Now to Him (…) (who) was taken up to heaven by the power of God Almighty upon the cherubim; to Him who is coming with power and glory to judge the dead and the living: to Him be dominion and glory and majesty and kingdom, and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit; who was, and is, and endures, both now and for all generations to the ages of ages, Amen.[2]

The mediatorship of Christ was not so central in early Syriac theology (especially in the liturgical texts), which rather highlighted the glorified Christ, seated at the right hand side of God the Father. This tradition has left traces of influences in the liturgical texts of later origin.

*The Mystery of Christ*

Syrian Orthodox prayers always present Christ as the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity who became Incarnate for our salvation. The mystery of Christ is almost always presented within the Trinitarian framework.

A *Sedro* of the Service of the Kneeling of Pentecost presents the mission of the Son, who was "sent by the Father to restore man who was created in God's image":

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[1] This would explain why almost all early Syriac sources (Acts of Thomas, Acts of John, Aphrahat, St. Ephrem, Doctrine of Addai, etc) speak of the Incarnation as "putting on a body". The clothing imagery was probably suitable to emphasize the "priority" of the divine element in the life and work of Jesus Christ. For a study of this theme: Sebastian Brock, "Clothing Metaphors as a means of Theological expression in Syriac Tradition," *in Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den Ostlichen Vätern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter*, ed. Margot Schmidt, Eichstädter Beiträge, Band 4 (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet 1982), 11-40 here at 15-16 and the illustrative texts.

[2] A. Vööbus, *The Didascalia Apostolorum in Syriac* (ch. 26), CSCO 408; SS. 176 (Louvain: Peeters Publishers, 1979), 248. Cf. Ch.20, CSCO 208, SS.180, 175.

> Because You were pleased, O God the Father, to restore man who was created in Your image, and who of his own free will slid into idolatry, You sent Your Word and Your Son for our reformation. When He became man without any alteration, He told us plainly and explained to us the ineffability of the Godhead, and announced to us the unknown things and the hidden secrets of Your wisdom in that He knows You and in that He is of You. He also informed us about the third Light of the Godhead Who is the Person of the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from You, O Father, in an unutterable manner (…)[3].

It was the Incarnate God the Word who was born, died on the cross, rose from the dead and finally ascended to heaven. This emphasis is found in almost every liturgical celebration of the Syrian Orthodox Church.

*Christ in the Anaphoras*

The prayers of the Syrian Orthodox Anaphoras (about 80!)[4] are invariably addressed to the Father, except the *anamnesis*[5] and the final thanksgiving prayer. The central part of the Anaphora [Sanctus - Post Sanctus - Institution Narrative-Anamnesis - Epiclesis] has been composed within the limits of the Trinitarian doctrine, giving particular emphasis to the Person and work of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

Here the Syrian Orthodox Anaphoras closely follow an early Antiochene liturgical tradition, where long doctrinal statements were incorporated into the Eucharistic prayer.[6]

However, the prayers of the preparation rites, Pre-Anaphora, Ordo Communis (the part of the Eucharistic celebration for the use of the faithful with hymns and responses, usually printed separately) and the Post-Communion, are largely inspired by Christological concerns.

*Post-Sanctus*

The central part of the Anaphora [Post-Sanctus (the prayer said by the priest inaudibly before the Institution narrative), Institution Narrative and the anamnesis] carefully summarizes the economy of the Son. As we have noted above, this has been attested in the early Antiochene anaphora. In the Post-Sanctus of the so-called Clementine Anaphora of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the economy of the Son has been narrated in the form of a thanksgiving addressed to the Father. The Anaphora of Saint James, (whose present form is certainly Antiochene)[7], has followed these lines and gives a brief summary of the economy of salvation in its Post-Sanctus (which is continued in the Institution Narrative):

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[3] Athanasius, *Ma'de'dono*, 319.

[4] *Anaphorae Syriacae* [= AS] (Rome, 1939-) gives the critical edition of 22 anaphoras with Latin translation. A. Raes gives a list of 80 anaphoras. *AS.* I-I, xxxix-xlii (details of the manuscripts). See also Sebastian Brock, "Two recent editions of Syrian Orthodox Anaphoras," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 102 (108): 436-445.

[5] But the concluding petition of the anamnesis has been addressed to God the Father.

[6] *Apostolic Constitutions VIII*, 12, 4-34; *Testament of our Lord*, I, 23.

[7] See Baby Varghese, *The Syriac Version of the Liturgy of St James. A Brief History for Students*, Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Studies 49 (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2001).

> In truth You are holy, O King of the worlds and giver of all holiness. Holy is Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and holy is Your Holy Spirit who searches out Your deep things, O God and Father. You are almighty, terrible, good, partaker of sufferings and especially towards Your creation, who made man from the earth, having bestowed upon him the delight of paradise. But when he had transgressed your commandment and fallen, You did not disregard, You did not leave him, O good (one), but did chasten him as a Father fair of mercies; having called him through the law, You did educate him through the prophets, and finally You did send Your only begotten Son himself to the world, that You might renew Your image; who when He had come down and was become Incarnate of Your Holy Spirit and of the holy, Virgin, and blessed Mary, and had conversed with man, having accomplished (*dabar*) everything for the salvation of our race.[8]

Here we find an extension of the Sanctus from *theologia* to an *oikonomia*. Creation and redemption are presented as the common work of the three divine persons. The expressions *Father sent the Son*, and *the Son came down*, and He was *become Incarnate of your Holy Spirit* underline the common will of the three divine persons and Their concomitant and simultaneous operations. The Institution narrative is the immediate continuation of this description and would naturally imply that the Institution of the Eucharist was part of the Son's economy for the "renewal of God's image".[9]

Following the example of the Clementine anaphora, earliest Syrian Orthodox Anaphoras such as the *Anaphora of Timothy of Alexandria* and *John of Bosra* contain long Christological statements. It is possible that before the introduction of the Creed, the post-Sanctus or similar prayers might have served the creedal purpose. The post-Sanctus of the *Anaphora of Timothy* typifies the early Syrian Orthodox attempts to incorporate doctrinal statements into the liturgical texts:

> In truth you are holy and blessed by all, O God the Father, and holy and blessed by all is your only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who was born ineffably before the world, who eternally holds the throne at right hand side of your majesty, and your Holy Spirit who is (also) holy and blessed by all, through whom all things of the earth and heaven are sanctified. And those who are near to You in heaven offer glory and honour, to your name and (You are) honoured by all, O King of the worlds. We therefore, your servants (who have) many sins while answering with the heavenly armies, we praise, glorify, and bless and ask You for mercy (and say) our Saviour and God, have mercy upon us, reveal Your merciful face to us and save us. For You are the one who had mercy upon our race and sent us Your only begotten Son, Lord, who is our Saviour Jesus Christ, Illuminator, Benefactor, and Redeemer of our souls and bodies, who was proclaimed by his holy Prophets in the ancient days, when He was about to dwell among us, came in the end of time and took himself our humanity; the Word became flesh; He neither took change nor alteration, but by the Holy Spirit He was conceived by Mary, the ever-Virgin and holy Mother of God. (He took) a body having rational and intelligent soul, in true and hypostatic union, which was not an imaginary apparition. Without separation or division, He truly took a human body and soul and all that a man has and in all things He resembled us except sin. He did not merely dwell among men, but while being perfect God the Word, He perfectly took flesh and became man. His divinity did not become humanity; but remained in His divinity and took completely the human nature. He was not two, but one King, one Christ, one Lord, one God the Word Incarnated

[8] *AS*, II-ii (Rome, 1953), 142-144. In other manuscripts, the last phrase is as follows: "(...)renewed your image that was impaired in mankind". Cf. *Anaphora. The Divine Liturgy of Saint James*, ed. Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel (Hackensack, 1967), 38.

[9] Cf. Varghese, *St James*, 28.

who is revealed to us. He dwelt among men, affirmed the earth and blessed it; He restrained the waves of the sea. He was known with His deeds, revealed in power, conquered the human passions and put an end to the transgression of law, converted the erring, and destroyed the power of death from us, which conquered man in the beginning, and showed to be invincible in the end. Through the (human body) He caught hold of (the death) and that which was caught was destroyed. Through his death, He restored the glory of man who was destitute from glory.[10]

This is perhaps the best Syrian Orthodox Christological summary incorporated into any of the Anaphoras. It contains the key non-Chalcedonian Christological expressions such as "*true and hypostatic union which was not an imaginary apparition*", "*He perfectly took flesh and became man*", "*He was not two, but one King, one Christ, one Lord, one God the Word incarnated*". It is to be noted that the reality of the human nature is duly emphasized, and any notion of change in His divinity has been excluded. These are reminiscent of the Christology of Severus of Antioch, Philoxenus of Mabbugh and Timothy of Alexandria (to whom the anaphora has been attributed).

The post-Sanctus of other ancient anaphoras also follow similar lines, retaining more or less similar or the same expressions, often more concisely, but highlighted "the hypostatic union" and "the reality of the human nature". Thus we find in the post-Sanctus of the *Anaphora of Mar Morutho:*

Holy is God the Father, Holy is the Son, and Holy is the Holy Spirit: (Holy) Trinity existing beyond separation; one self-existing Lordship, one invisible God, who so loved our human race, that even after the fall from the initial glory, by His love towards man, He did send His only begotten Son for our salvation. He, having put on flesh, divinized it through an unspeakable union and prepared a path to us for ascension to heaven and perfected all human conditions and fulfilled the Law.[11]

In the *First Anaphora of Dioscorus of Alexandria*, the reality of the human nature has been emphasized in clear terms:

(The Father) did send the only-begotten, Son of God for the salvation (of our race); having taken flesh from the Holy Spirit and from the Virgin, he was born bodily, without fantasy or illusion, and He became man perfectly, while remaining God without change.[12]

Again in the post-Sanctus of the *Anaphora of Jacob of Edessa*:

You did send your Son, the Word of God for our help; He took flesh from our creation in order to recreate it, and from us He received everything, which was proper to the humanity.[13]

Following the non-Chalcedonian tradition, the liturgical texts always underscore the fact that Logos was the subject of all activities in Christ, which is essential to bring out the soteriological dimension of Christology. Thus the post-Sanctus of the *Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom* speaks of the 'priority' of Logos, while putting due emphasis on the human nature of Christ:

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[10] AS. I-I (1939), 16-18. Cf. "Anaphora of the Patriarch John I," in *Die Anaphora der monophysitischen Patriarchen Johannan I*, ed. H. Fuchs (Münster Verlag der Aschedorffischen Verlagbuchhandlung, 1926), 12-16.

[11] MS. Pampakuda Syriac 57, fol. 239-249.

[12] *AS*. I-iii (1944),

[13] *AS*. III-I (1981), 56.

> Glory to You, for You have magnified our feeble race, and mixed it with the assemblies of your spiritual singers. You, O Lord, by your eternal mercy did send your beloved Son for our salvation and He manifested from Holy Virgin as a dazzling from a clear cloud and He took the likeness of a servant, while being truly the Son of your majesty, and He became man voluntarily to make us gods as He was pleased. He was born from a womb of flesh to give us rebirth from the spiritual womb. By His grace, He became a brother for us in order to make us your sons, O heavenly Father. He raised us from the low estate of servants and gave us the honour of heirs. He took us from the service of hired labourers and appointed us to the dignity of the sons and gave us pledge of the adoption as sons, with which we will call Father,' our Father'.[14]

If his humanity was not real, our salvation would not be possible. "Through that which is similar, He liberated the similar". Thus we find in the post-Sanctus of the *Anaphora of Gregory Yuhanon* (after 13th cent.?):

> And He took body and He was formed from the blood of the Virgin in order that through that which is similar, He might liberate the similar, and He redeemed the royal image which, by the sin of the transgression of the commandment, was tarnished and worn out and grew old in the hands of the captors. By His hypostatic union and ineffably without the experience of marriage, He performed all these things for our salvation.[15]

*Institution Narrative*

The Christological embolism of the post-Sanctus has been sometimes extended to introduce the Institution Narrative. In the *Anaphora of Cyril of Jerusalem/ Alexandria*, the Institution Narrative is preceded by a long Christological introduction:

> Who, when He had voluntarily became man and grown up to human dimension, He was not deprived of His glory, and He did not loose His godhead; but when He became incarnate, though He was by nature and wisdom, the Word, Wisdom and the power of God. For our salvation, He took the form of a servant. Before His salvific passion, He himself took bread…[16]

Introduction to the Institution Narrative is an ancient feature of the Antiochene Anaphora, already attested in the *Testament of Our Lord* (I, 23):

> Who, when He was betrayed to voluntary suffering, so that He might set straight those who had stumbled, and find the lost, and raise the dead and undo death, and burst the bonds of the devil, and fulfill the will of the Father, and tread upon Sheol, and open a way of life and lead the righteous to light, and fix a boundary, and lighten the darkness, and nurture infants, and reveal the resurrection, taking bread…[17]

The *Anaphora of Timothy of Alexandria* introduces the Institution Narrative with doctrinally balanced and carefully articulated wording:

> He who was in the form of God, did not think to usurp equality to you, O God the Father; but He emptied himself, assuming the death of a servant (*Phil. 2:7*) and died voluntarily; and while tasting death for every one, rose as the true (and) only-begotten Son, on account of the

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[14] *AS* I-ii (1940), 164. Another version of the same prayer is found in the *First Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh*. see. *AS* II-I (1951), 16-18. We are unable to say which is the earliest version.

[15] *AS* II-ii (1953), 218. Cf. St James, post-sanctus (quoted *supra*).

[16] *AS* I-iii (1944), 340.

[17] Eng. Tr.:, *Testamentum Domini*, ed. Grant Sperry-White, Collection Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Studies 19 (Nottingham: Bramcote, Grove Books, 1991), 16.

> eternal glory, that He had with you God the Father, who in the night in which He was betrayed, for the life and salvation of the world, took bread…[18]

*Anamnesis and the Glorified Christ:*

The post-Sanctus directly leads to the Institution Narrative, followed by the *anamnesis*. The *anamnesis* is an integral part of the narration of God's loving kindness towards humanity that began in the post-Sanctus. The post-Sanctus focuses on the reason for the Incarnation and the Institution Narrative presents the Eucharist as part of God's plan for the renewal and restoration of man. The *anamnesis* that follows, evokes the mains events in the economy of the Son, and is concluded by presenting Christ as Pantocrator, the supreme judge, to whom and through whom the Church intercedes for mercy and the pardon of sins. Thus after the blessing of the bread and wine, the anaphora continues:

> Remembering therefore, O Lord, Your death and Your Resurrection on the third day from among the dead, and Your Ascension into heaven and Your session at the right hand of God, and Your terrible and glorious second coming wherein You are about to judge the world in righteousness and reward every one according to his deeds: we offer You this fearful and bloodless sacrifice, that You would not deal with us according to our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities, but according to Your mildness and love for mankind, blot out our sins, Your suppliants. For Your people and Your inheritance beseech You, and through You to Your Father, saying…[19]

In the Syriac version of the Anaphora of St. James as well as in all other Syrian Orthodox anaphoras, the *anamnesis* has been addressed to the Son, (a feature already attested in the *Testament of our Lord*). It is probable that originally the Syrian Orthodox Anaphoras contained an *anamnesis* addressed to the Son (as in the *Testament of Our Lord*) and under the influence of the Anaphora of St. James (Jerusalemite and Antiochene versions), it might have been modified by adding a conclusion addressed to the Father. However, in the *Second Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh*, Christ has been qualified as "the one who receives the Eucharist" and thus the anamnesis has been addressed to him:

> Therefore, when we celebrate the mystery of Your economy of salvation for us, it is not with alien blood, symbol for Your divine image that we offer (...). But to You O Son, before Your Father we offer, as You receive You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit. You are being offered and You are the one who receives the sacrifices. You became an offering (*qurbana*) and You are honoured in the offerings (*qurbone*), as well as in tithes. You became the first fruit, the high priest, the killed one and the Resurrection of the dead. By us You are being offered to You, and You receive You from our hands. O Lord it is pleasing to You that You are being offered, for Your sacrifice is enough for the absolution of the world. Again it is fitting to You that You receive our offering to Your person, for You did offer it to Your Father for the salvation of our creation. For You are equal in honour to your Begetter. Your will made You inclined to be offered and Your love brought You to accept (it). Therefore, be pleased O Lord, by your abundant mercies, and accept this offering from the hands of my feebleness.[20]

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[18] *AS* I-I (1939), 18-20.

[19] *AS* II-I, 148; cf. Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 40.

[20] *AS* II-I (1951), 50-52. Cf. Also *the third Anaphora of Jacob.of Serugh* ID. P.80. The idea that Christ is the one who receives the Eucharist is found in several Anaphoras: *e.g.* In the *anamnesis* of the

*Introduction to the Diptychs*

Though the post-Sanctus and the *anamnesis* are the liturgical units often expanded with Christological embolisms, other prayers also underwent similar treatment. Thus in the *third Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh*, the introduction to the Diptychs (rather the conclusion of the Epiclesis) gives a long prayer narrating the loving kindness and the mighty deeds of the Son.

> We worship Your compassion, the One who defends the penitents, justifies the sinners, gathers together the lost and finds out the errands, the company of the timid, brother of the strangers, light of the gentiles, hope of the nations and the reconciliatory sacrifice of our victory. You have subdued the rebellious strongholds of the pagan falsehood which was resisting inside it the rebellion which had enslaved it. On the wood of the cross You have rooted out the holocausts of gods, who, by the errors of their sacrifices deceived the souls of their worshippers. You became the lamb, while You were the true shepherd, in order to (wipe out) the sins of the world by Your love. You have broken Your body to make it a food which sanctifies the mouths, for their lips were corrupted by their sacrifices. You have mixed the cup with Your precious blood to remove the sprinkling and libation of the heathens, which were offered in their temples to the rebellious demons. You entered the camps of the enemy when You mounted on the wood of the cross… In Your weakness, You acted with might against the powerful one who held the authority of the world of darkness.–(...).You became a wise mediator between the two sides which were at enmity and reconciled the creation with its Creator. You made peace between the creation and its Maker…"[21]

Such an expansion of this prayer is rather unusual in the West Syrian Anaphoras. In fact the theme and orientation of this prayer in *St. James* (which served as the main model—if not the sole—for all West Syrian anaphoras) are different.[22]

*Introduction to the Lord's Prayer:*

The introduction to the Lord's Prayer is another liturgical unit expanded with Christological emphasis, in which God has been usually called "God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (*St. James*), "Lord God Almighty, Father of our Lord and our God, Lord Jesus Christ" (*Timothy of Alexandria*). The Christological foundation of the Lord's Prayer has been emphasized by saying "the prayer that your Only-Begotten Son has taught his holy disciples".[23]

Sometimes the introduction has been Christologically formulated, using ideas and expressions similar to those of the post-Sanctus. Thus we find in the *Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom*:

> Lord our Lord, and merciful God, You are beyond all times and minds and (You exist) above all the principalities and the exalted orders of heaven. By Your grace and compassion, You have called and brought us near to the blessed service and the delights of the Paradise of Eden, and as we have remained in disobedience and have presumptuously violated and

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*Anaphora of Dionysius the Areopagite* we find: "We offer this awesome and bloodless sacrifice to You". (But the anamnesis of this anaphora follows the pattern of St. James).

[21] *AS* II-1 (1951), 80. The *Second Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh* also gives a similar, but brief Christological introduction to the Diptychs.

[22] See. *AS* II-ii, 152.

[23] First Anaphora of Dioscorus of Alexandria, St John Chrysostom, Third Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh etc.

transgressed Your dominical commandments and we were condemned to death, You did send your Only-Begotten Son, 'the splendour or your essence' (*Heb.* 1:3) for our salvation,[24] and He fulfilled His entire salvific dispensation for us. He established salvific commandments and life-giving laws for us, so that we shall be directed by them and walk (in them) and enter your presence (…) May we pray the great and dominical prayer that Your Only-Begotten had taught His holy Apostles.[25]

In the *Second Anaphora of Dioscorus of* Alexandria, the Christological emphasis of the introduction to the Lord's Prayer finds another expression by addressing it to the Father as well as to the Son:

God the Father, our Saviour and Liberator, our Lord Jesus Christ, Spring of life and source of wisdom, who by the theology of the divine science *have taught* [26] us the holy prayer to which the doors of the heaven are opened (…)[27]

In the *Anaphora of Cyril of Jerusalem/Alexandria*, the introduction contains a brief account of the economy of the Son:

[After having given a series of adjectives of God the Father, prayer continues:] We worship you, O Father Almighty (…) when You saw that our race (is) in peril and we have been enslaved by the absence of the teaching of life, You did not turn away Your help and Your care from us. Therefore You had first sent the prophets and the just to preach all ways and all reasons for our conversion. Then in the end of the days and times, through Your beloved Son You have spoken to us, the Only-Begotten, who is from You, the splendour and revelation who is from Your bosom, the Sun who is from Your substance, the truth, life and salvation, the incorporeal One became flesh and the One who is without body put on a body, who, while being with us on earth taught us the prayer to the Father and for us, He became a bloodless sacrifice and acceptable offering and fragrance incense. He entrusted us these holy mysteries full of life. Our God, perfect us in his most wise discipleship, so that with sincere spirit and pure conscience and with tongues filled with exultation, may we cry out and sing and pray and say to You, *Our Father…*[28]

*Preparation rites, Pre-Anaphora and the Ordo Communis*

Though the central part of the Anaphora (Sanctus-Institution/Anamnesis-Epiclesis) has retained the Trinitarian structure, the prayers of the preparation rites, Pre-Anaphora and the *Ordo Communis* are largely inspired by Christological concerns.

In the preparation of the bread and wine, the accompanying prayers are addressed to the Son. This is quite natural, because in the Antiochene tradition, the preparation of the bread and wine was always understood in relation to the passion and death of Christ.[29] Thus taking the bread the priest says:

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[24] "You did send your Son for our salvation, as a ray from the paternal sphere (*speira*)": Second Anaphora of Jacob of Serugh (Introduction to the Lord's Prayer).

[25] *AS* I-ii (1940), 190-92. The *Anaphora of Dionysius the Areopagite* gives the following introduction: "At the end of the time, you sent your Only-Begotten Son towards us and by your grace you made us his brothers and you named us your sons".

[26] *Second person masculine in the Syriac text.*

[27] *AS* I-iii.

[28] *AS* I-iii (1944).

[29] See Theodore of Mopsuestia: "And when the offering which is about to be placed (on the altar) is brought out in the sacred vessels of the paten and the chalice, we must think that Christ our Lord is being led and brought to His passion (...) " *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer*

> He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and like a sheep before the shearer, is dumb so He opened not His mouth in His humiliation (*Acts* 8:32, *Is*. 53:7).[30] Lord, prepare it with Thy hands. May the Lord reign world with out end. (*As he places the Host in the Paten*). O Thou First-Begotten of the heavenly Father, accept this first-born from the hands of Thy weak and sinful servant.[31]

Similarly, the priest mixes water with wine and says:

> O Lord God, as Thy divinity was united with Thy humanity so unite this water with this wine.[32] (*He pours it into the chalice saying*) Our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified on the Cross between two thieves in Jerusalem, and was pierced in His side with the spear, and there flowed out from Him blood and water to wash away the sins of all creation. And he who saw it testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows well that what he said is true that you may believe (*Jn* 19:35).[33]

The mixing of the wine and blood symbolizes the inseparable union of the two natures in Christ. Thus we can find an attempt to ritualize a key Christological idea, which is further seen in the fraction ceremony.

The first part is concluded with an *eqbo* (i.e.*termination*), in which Christ is addressed as the One who receives the sacrifice.[34]

*Pre-Anaphora*

The Pre-Anaphora begins with the so-called *Ihydoyo* (*Only Begotten*)—the Syriac version of the *Monogenes*- which serves as an entrance hymn. This Christological hymn, attributed to Severus of Antioch by the Syrians, was probably introduced in the ninth century.[35] Apart form the Nicene Creed, it is the most widely used doctrinal statement in the Syrian Orthodox Church. Thus it is sung at the close of the *Sext* in every daily office.

> *I will exalt thee, O King my Lord,* (*Ps.*145:1)[36] the Only-Begotten Son, the Word of the heavenly Father, who art immortal in Thy nature; Who by Thy grace came for the life and salvation of all mankind, and did become Incarnate of the Holy and Glorious pure Virgin, Mother of God, Mary; Who did become man, being God without change, and was crucified for us. O Christ, our Lord, Who by Thy death did trample our death and destroy it, Who art

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*and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, trans. A. Mingana,Woodbrooke Studies VI (Cambridge, 1933), 85.

[30] See "Byzantine Prothesis," in *La prière des églises de rite byzantin*, tome I, E. Mercier and F. Paris trans. (Chevetogne, [2]1937), 223.

[31] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 6.

[32] Byzantine: "Lord, bless this holy union (...)" *La prière des églises de rite byzantin*, 224.

[33] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 6. In the Byzantine prothesis this prayer has been said when the priest pierces the side of the prosphora. Cf. *La prière des églises de rite byzantin*, 224.

[34] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 9. Then the prayer ends with the usual Trinitarian doxology.

[35] The Byzantines attributes it to Justinian. See D. Julien Puyade, "Le Troparion *ho Monogenis*," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 2s.t.VII (= XVII, 191): 253-58 (argued for the possible authorship by Severus). V. Grumel, "L'auteur et la date de composition du Troparion *ho Monogenis*," *Echos d'Orient* XXII (1923): 398-418 (argued that Justinian might be the author). Its first attestation in the Byzantine Eucharist is in the ninth century. See. Robert Taft, "Monogenis, ho", *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* vol. II, ed. Alexander Kazhdan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1397. It appeared in the Syrian Orthodox Pre-Anaphora in the same epoque.

[36] The Syrian had added this verse to the *Ihidoyo*.

> One of the Holy Trinity and art worshipped and glorified in the unity of Thy Father and Thy living Holy Spirit, have mercy upon us".[37]

It is interesting to note that this hymn, whose authorship has been attributed to the Emperor Justinian by the Byzantines, contains the key Syrian Orthodox Christological concepts such as "God the Word became man without change" and "one of the Holy Trinity died on the cross".

The *Ihydoyo* is followed by *Trisagion*, another entrance hymn, chanted in almost every West Syrian liturgical celebration. In the East, the *Trisagion* was understood either as a hymn addressed to the Father or as a Christological hymn. In Jerusalem and in Constantinople as well as in the West, it was taken to be addressed to the Trinity. But in Syria, some regions of Asia and Egypt, it was interpreted as a hymn addressed to the Son. Several Chalcedonian texts from Syria and adjacent areas (including Cyprus) followed a Christological interpretation.[38] In the context of the post-Chalcedonian Christological controversy, the non-Chalcedonians of Antioch emphasized the Christological meaning by the addition of the phrase "*He who was crucified for us (have mercy upon us).*"[39] The modification of the *Trisagion* was unacceptable to the Chalcedonians and this led to heated controversies.

Thus the *Ihydoyo* and the *Trisagion* bring out the Christological dimension of the Pre-Anaphora.

*The Fraction*

In most of the Christian traditions fraction is rather a utilitarian rite that precedes the Communion. In the Syrian Orthodox tradition since the 9th-10th century the fraction became more elaborate with the addition of a series of complex rites and prayers articulating the mystery of the passion. At least until the eleventh century, in several dioceses and monasteries, the fraction was done with a simple formula: "We break heavenly bread and sign the holy chalice in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit".[40] By the 12th century this was replaced with a longer formula, relating various gestures of the fraction ceremony to the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

Since the fourth century, the Syro-Antiochene tradition has seen the fraction as a type of the passion and death of Christ.[41] Among the West Syrians, Moses Bar Kepha was probably the first to give an elaborate commentary on the fraction:

> The priest takes some of the chosen bread (*presto*, a Syriac word for the Bread offered for the Eucharist) in his hands. And whereas he breaks it in two, he shows that God the Word truly

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[37] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 20.

[38] V. S. Janeras, "Les byzantins et le trisagion christologique," in *Miscellanea Liturgica in onore de Cardinale Giacomo Lercaro*, t. II (Roma/Parigi/Tournai/New York: Desclée, 1966-1967), 469-99.

[39] Byzantine sources are unanimous in saying that the addition was made by Peter the Fuller, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch (d. 488). See, Sebastian Brock, "The Thrice-holy Hymn in Liturgy," *Sobornost/Eastern Churches Quarterly* 7, 2 (1986): 24-34.

[40] Varghese, *St. James*, 40-41.

[41] E.g. Theodore of Mopsuestia and Narsai.

> suffered in the flesh and was sacrificed and broken on the cross. Whereas he takes some of the body and dips it in the blood, and brings some of it [the blood] and signs over the body, he shows that this Slain One was besprinkled with His blood in the upper room when He said, 'This is my blood', and on the cross when His side was pierced with a spear and there came forth from it blood and water, and He was besprinkled therewith. Again, whereas he brings some of the blood and signs the body, he makes a union of the soul with the body; and he shows that after the soul of the Word was separated from His body, His soul returned and united to His body; howbeit His Godhead was in no wise separated either from His body or from His soul, neither can it be separated (…). But again, whereas, after he has signed [with] some of the blood over the body, he unites and fits together these two halves of the *presto* one with another, he symbolizes and shows by this that Emmanuel is one, and is not divided into two natures after the union. Again, he shows that after He was sacrificed on the cross He made all to be at peace by the blood of His cross (*Col.* 1:20), and united and joined together heavenly with the earthly beings, and the People with the peoples, and the soul with the body. Again by fetching the *presto* about in a circle, he declares and signifies that he was sacrificed on the cross for the sin of the circle of the world. Why does he bring some of the blood to the body and sign, and not bring some of the body to the blood and sign? And we say, because the blood is the soul; and it was the soul that came and was united to the body when He rose from the dead, and the body did not go and be united to the soul.[42]

Bar Kepha comments on complex rites which, most probably, existed in his days. The rites must have been inspired by the minute interpretations given to the fraction. The present Syrian Orthodox fraction rites are essentially the same as the one described by Bar Kepha. It contains three elements: a prayer attributed to Dionysius Bar Salibi; a hymn attributed to Jacob of Serugh (addressed to the Father narrating the passion of the Son); and brief prayers addressed to Christ.[43] The long prayer, attributed to Bar Salibi, was probably inspired by the commentaries of Bar Kepha and Bar Salibi on the Eucharist. It is in fact a vivid presentation of the Syrian Orthodox Christology:

> Thus truly did the Word of God suffer in the flesh and was sacrificed and broken on the cross; and His soul was departed from His body, while His Godhead was in no way departed either from His soul or from His body. And He was pierced in His side with a spear and there flowed out blood and water for the atonement of the whole world, and His Holy body was stained therewith. For the sins of the whole world, the Son died on the cross, and His soul came and was united with His body. And He turned us from the wrong practice to the right deeds. By His blood He reconciled and united the Heavenly with the earthly beings, and the people with the gentiles, and the soul with the body. The third day, He rose again from the sepulcher, and He is One Emmanuel, and is indivisible into two natures after the unity indivisible. Thus we believe and thus we confess and thus we confirm that this flesh is of this blood and that this blood is of this flesh.[44]

The prayer is accompanied by a series of gestures that correspond to the phrases. First of all, the bread is broken into two halves (symbolizing the separation of the soul from the body). Then they are joined together (symbolizing the inseparability of the Godhead from the soul and the body in spite of death). One half is dipped in the wine and the other is signed with it ("the flow of blood and water") and then the two halves are one again joined

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[42] *Two Commentaries of the Jacobite Liturgy by George, Bishop of the Arab Tribes, and Moses Bar Kepha* (...), ed. R. H. Connolly and H. W. Codrington (London: Williams, Norgate, 1913), 67-68.

[43] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 49-50.

[44] Ibid.

together ("the soul united to the body"). The bread is turned in an anticlockwise direction ('he turned us from wrong practices'), and then raised ("Resurrection"). Then one piece is cut off and dipped in the wine and the entire bread is moistened.[45]

Here we have an example of the ritualisation of the symbolic interpretation given to the fraction with relation to the passion and death of Christ. Thus, in a sense, Christology has been visualized through symbolic gestures. Obviously, the West Syrians have given interpretations that correspond to their Christology, and the complex rites might have arisen out of them.

The other two prayers of the fraction rites speak of the death of the Son for the life of men. Thus in the hymn attributed to Jacob of Serugh we find:

> Father of truth, behold Thy Son, the well-pleasing sacrifice (…)
>
> Because of my sin, Thy Beloved One bore the nails and the spear. His sufferings are enough to reconcile Thee and by them may I live.[46]

The concluding prayer speaks of "God who was pierced":

> Thou art Christ the God who was pierced in His side on the heights of Golgotha in Jerusalem for us. Thou art the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Do Thou pardon our offences and forgive our sins and set us at Thy right hand.

*Christ in the Liturgical Year*

The liturgical year gradually unfolds the mystery of Christ in a rhythmical sequence. The Church relives the whole life of Christ: Nativity, Baptism, Fasting, Passion, Resurrection, Sending of the Holy Spirit, and finally the triumph of the cross. Each phase in the earthly life of Christ includes and anticipates the whole economy of Christ.[47] Each celebration, whether Nativity, Epiphany, Passion or Resurrection is set in the context of the whole, for each leads us to Christ the "incarnate God". Thus in the prayers of a dominical feast, the whole mystery of Christ is often evoked, giving emphasis to his pre-existence, equality with the Father, Incarnation, Resurrection and the Second Coming. Each celebration provides an occasion to meditate on the wonder that the "Creator came down and experienced human limitations to restore the creation". Thus it is the divinity of Christ which is highlighted in most of the hymns and prayers, a tradition that could go back to Saint Ephrem. The feast "portrays Christ" before our eyes. The day of the event becomes contemporaneous. A typical Syrian Orthodox hymn, the *Sedro* (of the evening) of the feast of the Nativity is an example for this typically Syriac approach to the mystery of Christ:

> Today God dawned on earth and illuminated the world up to its border. Today the bread of life came forth from Bethlehem of Judea. Today the door and the Lord who enters through it were seen. Today the mystery was fulfilled and today the hands embraced Him who was

[45] This is but a general description of the gestures. Some of the minute details are left out.

[46] Athanasius, *Anaphora*, 50. During this hymn, remembering the passion of the Son, the priest breaks the bread without dividing it into small pieces.

[47] Varghese, *West Syrian Liturgical Theology*, 138.

> never apprehended by the heavenly minds; the fingers touched Him who was never seen by the senses of any angel; the knees bore Him who was borne by the cherubim.[48]

The humanity of Christ is never ignored. Thus in the hymn that follows the above *Sedro* we find: "Blessed is the Child of wonder who showed himself as an infant and lived in human form".[49] Christ is always called the "incarnate Son of God", the one who is perfect God and perfect man.

It was necessary that the eternal and ineffable God become incarnate to redeem the human race. Thus in the feast of Epiphany, in a prayer addressed to Christ we find:

> You are the incomprehensible, eternal and ineffable God who was beheld on our earth, taking upon Yourself the image of a slave and the likeness of man, because Your compassion could not suffer to behold our human race harnessed under the yoke of the adversary, therefore You came down and redeemed us.[50]

This does not mean that the whole Trinity was incarnate. The Son of God, the Second person of the Holy Trinity came down for our salvation. This has been repeated in almost every prayer of the feast of the Nativity. The Hymn of the procession gives a summary of the Syrian Orthodox Christology:

> In the end of time, the pure Virgin, the daughter of David gave birth to the Son, who was born from the Father, beyond time and without flux. The Only-Begotten Son is One nature (*kyono*) and One *hypostasis* (*qnumo*), without division, Lord Christ who came for our salvation. He is one Son to the Father as well as to Mary, for He is the first and the Last and can never be divided. Cursed is he who counts him as two hypostases and two natures, and let him inherit Sheol.[51]

The one who is not subject to number in his divinity came down as foretold by the parables and mysteries of the Old Testament:

> Glory to You the self-existing Only-Begotten from the Father, who dawned from the holy and Virgin womb, when You were with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, three hypostases which cannot be separated by the number of essences, which form one substance that do not come under numbering. You, O sublime Child who have dawned today, the just indicated You beforehand by their parables and mysteries (...) (*Then narrates how the Old Testament prophesies were fulfilled in the birth of Christ*).[52]

Though the prayers and hymns of the feasts of Nativity and Epiphany always exalt the divinity of Christ, the humanity is never pushed back. The Great One, the King of Glory really became man. Thus the introductory prayer of the Matins (*Safro*) presents the reality of Christ's human nature:

> The King of Glory dwelt in the Virgin as a common (man) and truly became Incarnate from the young girl and was born as a poor man in the cave to save the people and the gentiles.[53]

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[48] *Ma'de'dono* (Pampakuda, 1984), 17.

[49] Ibid. 19.

[50] Blessing of the water. (Prayer over the water), *Ma'de'dono* (Athanasius), 67; *Ma'de'dono* (Pampakuda), 191-93.

[51] *Ma'de'dono* (Pampakuda), 65. Samuel Athanasius (*Ma'de'dono*) gives another hymn for the procession.

[52] *Ma'de'dono* (Pampakuda), 9.

[53] Ibid. 91

However the prayers exult the divinity because of the great wonder that the one who is clad with flames put on a human body. Thus in the hymn of the procession we find:

> The Virgin has begotten the Wonder, God the Word, the Mediator between divinity and men. It is a wonder that He had put on a body, the One who is clad with flames and became man for our salvation.[54]

For the West Syrians, the expression "putting on a body" implies that God the Word himself was born and seen in the bosom of Mary, grew, received baptism, suffered and died on the cross. The *Promiun* (a typically Syrian Orthodox prayer) of the Morning of the Nativity provides an example.

> The holy Child who is, in His essence, hidden in the bosom of the Father, who, by His own will and of the His Father and of His living and Holy Spirit, was pleased to be manifested and be revealed by His grace. The One who is exalted from the worlds and greater than the creation, came (down) towards His creation. The One who is without body, and the Spiritual was seen in the glorious bosom of His mother. The One who is hidden from the worlds came to birth by His love for humanity…[55]

The West Syrians maintain that God the Word experienced all human conditions such as birth, growth, hunger, pain and finally death. The paradox that the Great one became small is expressed in the prayers of almost every dominical feast. The *Sedro* of the Morning of Nativity is an example:

> You are wonder O God, for divinely You became man without being changed from the nature of Your divinity. You are wonder O God, for You were seen bodily in Your greatness for our salvation. You are wonder, for You lied down in a cave, while the heaven and the earth are completely filled with You. You are wonder and without limit in Your Essence; but You were contained in the bosom of the Virgin, though You are terribly incomprehensible. You are wonder, for You became man, while being glorious God invisibly and ineffably.[56]

Christ's sacrifice on the cross effected the reconciliation of those who are in heaven and on earth. In the heavenly worship, human beings were made participants, thanks to the "indivisible unity" of divinity and humanity in Christ. This has been stated in the *Sedro* of the Service of Reconciliation on Monday, the first day of the Great Lent:

> By Your love for us, You offered Yourself as an acceptable sacrifice and a sweet fragrance. By Your crucifixion, You broke down the barrier of enmity and by Your Blood, You reconciled the dwellers of heaven and earth and removed the enmity from the middle and united them to become one. By the indivisible unity of Your Godhead from eternity and Your human nature in time, You called all those who were afar off and those who were near, and thus You joined them together with the concord of Your divine love.[57]

It was Emmanuel Himself who rode on a colt on the first Palm Sunday. Thus during the procession on the Palm Sunday the West Syrians sing:

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[54] Ibid. 63.

[55] Ibid. 103.

[56] Ibid., 107.

[57] *Ma'de'dono* (Athanasius), 89-91; *Ma'de'dono* (Pampakuda), 213.

> Let us praise and worship Emmanuel who humbled himself and rode on a colt through his meekness.[58]

The Lord before whom the heavenly hosts tremble, came down and was pleased to be glorified by men:

> O Lord, God of the heavenly hosts, before whom the Cherubim, the Seraphim, the angels, the archangels and the spiritual companies tremble and quake from fear, at the living fire of Your Godhead, and in fear and trembling they bless, praise and sanctify your majesty unceasingly; and on earth You were willing to be praised and glorified by the infants, the children, the young men and the holy and innocent disciples with their hosannas.[59]

*Conclusion*

In introducing Christological texts from the patristic sources, or using Christological terminology, the West Syrians carefully followed the mia physite Christology of Cyril of Alexandria. They were interested in pointing out what the incarnate God the Word did for us, the human beings.

[58] Ibid. 121. In another hymn: "He whom the Cherubim carry with fear, was carried on a colt, when He entered into Jerusalem". Ibid. 121; Pampakuda, 265.

[59] Service of the blessing of the Palms (Opening prayer): *Ma'de'dono* (S. Athanasius), 143; Pampakuda, 301.

# Christology and the Armenian Holy Sacrifice (*Soorp Badarak*)[1]

*Fr. Michael Daniel Findikyan*

At the conclusion of what is probably the finest broad survey of the history, structure and distinctive features of the Armenian Divine Liturgy, the great scholar of eastern liturgy, Robert Taft, steps back from his microscopic analysis of liturgical units, structures, euchological texts, and comparative observations to consider "the inner life" of the Armenian Church's liturgical tradition, the "spirit that animates it (...) the ethos of this tradition". As only one possessed of both a thorough familiarity with the content of the Armenian Rite *and* a broad command of other liturgical traditions East and West could, Taft submits:

> We might call the Armenian tradition "incarnational", with a Christology rooted not only in the mystery of Easter, but especially in the mystery of Christmas. The entire inner history of the Armenian tradition bears the stamp of the Christological debates surrounding the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451).[2]

Now to characterise the Armenian Rite as "incarnational" or Christological, is by no means to suggest that the Byzantine, Coptic, Roman, and other rites are unconcerned with the Person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is most assuredly the agent of all Christian liturgy,[3] a foundation that is relentlessly and eloquently expressed in the liturgical texts of every Christian rite East and West, whether extant or extinct. Nevertheless, when compared with other traditions, the Armenian Rite betrays a particularly exuberant fascination with the Person of Jesus Christ. As Taft observes, this can only be the consequence of the Christological controversies into which the Armenians too were drawn in waves up to the present day (despite the remarkable theological convergence achieved by official and non-official consultations among theologians of the Armenian and other Oriental Orthodox Churches on the one hand, and Eastern Orthodox or Roman Catholic colleagues, on the other). As a proponent of a non- or pre-Chalcedonian, Cyrilian, so-called

[1] For the transliteration of Armenian terms in the body of the text, a simplified phonetic system has been employed that is based on Western Armenian pronunciation as found in *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church with Modern Armenian and English Translations, Transliteration, Musical Notation, Introduction and Notes*, [M.] Daniel Findikyan, General Editor (New York: St. Vartan Press, 1999). Armenian proper nouns in the notes have been transliterated according to the system in the *Revue des Etudes arméniennes*.

[2] Robert F. Taft S.J., "The Armenian Liturgy: Its Origins and Characteristics," in *Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Art, Religion and Society*. Papers Delivered at a Symposium at the Pierpont Morgan Library 21-22 May 1994, eds. Thomas F. Mathews and Robert S. Wieck (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1998), 13-30 here at 22.

[3] As Taft himself has repeatedly asserted, e.g., idem, "Christ in the Byzantine Divine Office," in *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer: Trinity, Christology and Liturgical Theology*, ed. Bryan D. Spinks (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), 85.

by some "monophysite" Christological confession, the Armenian Church was incessantly accused of heresy by the Byzantine and Latin West. The Armenians were thus cast into an apologetic stance with regard to their understanding of salvation in Jesus Christ. Such a preoccupation with Christological speculation resulted in the development of a significant archive of original dogmatic Christological treatises by native theologians and teachers that has rightfully become important source material for better understanding the Armenian Church's authentic Christological position, particularly in the context of ecumenical deliberations of the past half century or so.[4]

Far too often neglected in both the polemical encounters of the past and in more irenic ecumenical discussions of recent decades, however, is the indelible mark that Christological apologetics and speculation have left on the very fabric of the Armenian Church's liturgical life. Indeed, the theology expressed in the texts of the Church's liturgy possesses an authority quite apart from, and prior to the synthetic dogmatic formulas found in canons, creeds and conciliar acts. For all of Orthodoxy's (Eastern and Oriental) insistence on the classical patristic axiom *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, ("Let the rule of prayer establish the rule of faith") or its modern, more incisive adaptation, *lex orandi est lex credendi* ("The rule of prayer *is* the rule of faith"), polemicists often neglect the plain historical fact that the Christological controversies of the fifth century represented an effort to understand and express theologically what the Churches had long been avowing instinctively and intuitively in their liturgies.[5] As Jaroslav Pelikan observed, "The Christian worship of Jesus Christ was an assumed presupposition on both sides [Antiochian and Alexandrian], and nothing in the debate caused either side to question its propriety. Theology had to come to terms with liturgy".[6]

In fact, it could be said that what the Church declares to God in the inspired words of her liturgy is a more authentic and accurate gauge of her orthodoxy than the stark conciliar statements and synthetic dogmatic definitions on which we are accustomed to focus our attention in our efforts to ascertain the "official" teaching of this or that Church. Of course it would be best if the deliberations of the holy fathers at councils and synods were not marginalized.

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[4] The latest study of the whole issue is the exhaustive and authoritative work of Nina Garsoïan, *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient*, CSCO 100, Subs. 574 (Louvain: Peeters, 1999). For a convenient summary see idem, "L'Église arménienne aux V$^{e}$-VI$^{e}$ siècles: Problèmes et hypothèses," in *Des Parthes au califat: Quatre leçons sur la formation de l'identité arménienne*, Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 10 (Paris: de Boccard, 1997).

[5] The literature that has amassed in recent decades on this long-forgotten axiom need not be itemized here. For a recent and strong affirmation of the predominant role of the liturgy in the formulation of theology see Maxwell E. Johnson, *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity: The Interplay between Christian Worship and Doctrine* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), especially 1-23.

[6] Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Person of the God-Man," in *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, I (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), 240-241. Maxwell Johnson confirms this assertion with historical examples, idem, *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity*, 88-94. For an illustration of this principle for the assessment of the orthodoxy of a sister Church, see idem, "Satis est: Ecumenical Catalyst or Narrow Reductionism?" in Idem, *The Church in Act: Lutheran Liturgical Theology in Ecumenical Conversation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2015), 221-240.

Yet we must recognize that their theological artifacts, by definition and intent, are polemical and therefore controversial and inexorably biased.[7] The historical context of the great councils bears this out abundantly. Furthermore, the terse theological terms and formulas that we theologians juggle—*mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene; communicatio idiomatum; hypostasis* and the like—represent at best the "grammar" of theology. Theology is much more than dogmatic definitions and terminology. It is the prayerful vocation of coming to the knowledge of God. Every discipline has its specialists and erudite teachers, of course, and theology is certainly no exception. However, one could no more claim to have grasped the fullness of the Armenian Church's authentic understanding of the Person and redemptive achievement of Jesus Christ by having scrutinized the doctrinal terminology of her synodal decrees, than one should claim to have fathomed the transcendent brilliance of J. S. Bach's chorale preludes or Shakespeare's sonnets by tracing the sequence of E-flat major triads in the one, or the prevalence of aorist participles in the other. For all of the technical genius manifested in the innermost mechanics of their works, surely a more judicious assessment of their value would oblige us to listen to Bach's organ works and to read and recite Shakespeare's prose. That, after all, was their ultimate *raison d'être*. As for us seeking the knowledge of God, have we not been taught that, "If you are a theologian, you will pray truly, and if you pray truly you will be a theologian"?[8]

It is precisely in the Church's liturgy, her Spirit-driven "Abba, Father!" [*Gal*. 4:6] that the Church's most instinctive and genuine confession of faith resides. There it is lived, learned, transmitted and, most importantly, is solemnly and officially confessed to God in prayer. What council or synodal decree could have the same authority as that bloodless sacrifice of praise that is consecrated day after day to the Father in and through the Lord's Body and Blood of the Eucharist, and by extension in and through every liturgical and sacramental undertaking of the Body of Christ? The Church's preeminent, most authentic expression of its Christology (or any theological matter) is to be revealed not by hierarchs assembled in a synodal chamber or by theologians deliberating around a conference table, but by God's people gathered before the holy altar. Indeed, the history of the Christological controversies shows that what created dissension among the Churches were not so much fundamental contradictions in Christology, as much as concerns that a particular theological formulation *could be* perverted by some in a heterodox manner. Modern scholars have determined that the Armenians were initially opposed to Chalcedon's Christology not

[7] For another argument that the authority of Church councils is not absolute but qualified, see (Archbishop) Tiran Nersoyan, "Problems of Consensus in Christology: The Function of Councils," originally published in *Wort und Wahrheit* 1 (December, 1972): 70-83, reprinted in *Christ in East and West*, ed. Paul R. Fries and Tiran Nersoyan with introduction by Jeffrey Gros (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 49-64 and Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, *Armenian Church Historical Studies: Matters of Doctrine and Administration*, ed. Nerses Vrej Nersessian (New York: St. Vartan Press, 1996), 155-175.

[8] Evagrius Pontus, *Chapters on Prayer* 61. *Evagrius of Pontus. The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, translated with introduction and commentary by Robert E. Sinkewicz, Oxford Early Christian Studies, eds. Gillian Clark and Andrew Louth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 199.

because they considered it conspicuously or fundamentally defective, but because Nestorians on Armenia's southern border were hailing it as a vindication of their radical dyophysitism.[9] The potential for the misinterpretation and misapplication of a theological claim can never be entirely eliminated as long as we frail human beings have any role in the contemplation of God's eternal truths. Under such circumstances the premier touchstone and final arbiter of a Church's orthodoxy can be none other than her liturgy.

Obviously, such an approach requires theologians to acclimate themselves to the language and ethos of the *lex orandi*. In the liturgy, the articulation of Orthodox Christology is entirely subsumed within, and conditioned by the preeminent goal of doxology and the sacramental incorporation of the faithful as the Body of Christ. Liturgical texts, in other words, read differently than synodal decrees or dogmatic letters, and the like.[10] In contrast to some other rites, polemical language is almost unknown in Armenian liturgical and hymnological texts. The denunciation by name of individuals, and the explicit exaltation of Councils and Christological definitions, is almost non-existent in the Armenian Rite. For better or worse, this makes the evaluation of liturgical texts for their inherent Christology difficult. In the liturgy, Orthodoxy resides in poetry, which inherently invites prayerful engagement and *mystagogy*—induction into the Mystery/Sacrament, as opposed to facile and superficial proof-texting and polemics.

Some decades ago, Mesrob Krikorian (now retired Archbishop), a delegate to several of the unofficial consultations between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches from 1964-1971, surveyed "The Christology in the Liturgical Tradition of the Armenian Church", where he collected a medley of liturgical texts having some bearing on the Armenian Church's traditional Christology.[11] Focusing primarily on hymn texts, he largely overlooked the Divine Liturgy. In what follows, I draw attention to five key texts from the *Soorp Badarak*, the Eucharistic "Holy Sacrifice" of the Armenian Church, which eloquently exhibit her understanding of the great mystery of Jesus Christ, albeit often in terms and images to which neither polemicists nor ecumenists are generally accustomed. To be sure, these few texts do not exhaust the Christological content of the *Badarak*, but they are salient and have been largely neglected in recent ecumenical discussions.

We begin with the famous *Monogenes*, which bears mentioning here precisely because it is a Byzantine Christological confession that was adopted by

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[9] For a concise account see Abraham Terian, *Macarius of Jerusalem Letter to the Armenians AD335*, Avant: Treasures of the Armenian Christian Tradition, ed. Michael Daniel Findikyan, Vol. 4 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, 2008), 38, fn. 69. The most recent, comprehensive treatment of the controversy is Garsoïan, *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient*, *passim*.

[10] Let us leave aside for the present purposes the even more arduous challenges attending the discernment of theology within other, extra-verbal liturgical loci: icons, church architecture, chant tones, ritual movements and gestures, et al.

[11] Idem, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 13 (1968): 212-225; reprinted in *Does Chalcedon Divine or Unite? Towards Convergence in Orthodox Christology* eds. Paulos Gregorios, William H. Lazareth and Nikos A. Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), 93-120.

the Armenians, who gave it a prominent place at the head of their *Badarak*, just after the entrance rites. Here is a literal translation of the Armenian version:[12]

> Only-begotten Son and God the Word and immortal Being. You took it upon yourself to become body from the holy Mother of God and ever Virgin. Without changing You became man. You were crucified, O Christ our God. By death You trampled on death. You are one of the Holy Trinity, sharing glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Raise us to life.

The hymn was added to the Byzantine liturgy under the patronage of Emperor Justinian in 535/6, and corresponds word-for-word with a passage in his *Confession of the True Faith Against the Three Chapters*.[13] The hymn constitutes a confession of essential Christological doctrine that studiously avoids the controversial terminology of the Council of Chalcedon including the thorny enumeration of natures in or of Christ. This corresponds with Justinian's efforts to bring closure to the Christological disputes that were ravaging the Empire. The *Monogenes* exhibits Justinian's so-called neo-Chalcedonianism, which turned Orthodox Christology back toward an Alexandrian/Cyrilian framework,[14] and which found favour with the Armenians and other Cyrilian "monophysites". Since the piece is not mentioned explicitly by any of the earlier Armenian commentators on the *Badarak*, it was probably added locally and progressively after the turn of the millennium.

Since the early sixth century, the Armenian Church's *Badarak* has included a version of the Creed that differs in some details from the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of 381.[15] Contrary to its unrivalled stature today, scholars have shown that for a century or more after its promulgation, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed was only one of many authoritative creedal statements that circulated in East and West, and it was not considered to be the exclusive measure of apostolic Orthodoxy.[16] The Armenian Church's version of the Nicene Creed corresponds to a Greek creedal statement known as the *Hermeneia*, which has been falsely attributed to St. Athanasius,[17] probably because of its Christological interest. Though it corresponds overwhelmingly to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the *Hermeneia* omits Nicaea's reference to

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[12] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 11-12. All translations from Classical Armenian are mine unless otherwise noted.

[13] Hans-Joachim Schultz, *The Byzantine Liturgy: Symbolic Structure and Faith Expression*, tr. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1986), 30. There is a substantial bibliography on the *Monogenes*, among which see John Breck, "The Troparion 'Monogenes': An Orthodox Confession of Faith," *St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Quarterly* 26, 4 (1982): 203-228.

[14] Schultz, *Byzantine Liturgy*, 22.

[15] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 18-19. Yovsēp' Gat'rchean, *The Faith Confession by which the Armenian Church Operates* (Vienna, 1891), (in Armenian). Gabriele Winkler, *Über die Entwicklungsgeschichte des armenischen Symbolums: Ein Vergleich mit dem syrischen und griechischen Formelgut unter Einbezug der relevanten georgischen und äthiopischen Quellen*, Orientalia Chirstiana Analecta 262 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000) and my critical review in *The Catholic Historical Review* 89/2 (April 2003): 280-282.

[16] "The *Filioque*: A Church-Dividing Issue? An Agreed Statement of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, St. Paul's College, Washington, DC, October 25, 2003, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 48/1 (2004): 97, 99.

[17] Charles Renoux, *Initiation chrétienne I: Rituels arméniens du baptême* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1997), 85 fn. 53. See further references there.

Pontius Pilate, recasts the article on the Holy Spirit in a more overtly Christological manner,[18] and adds a number of assertions to reinforce both the notion that Jesus was *homoousios* with the Father and, most significantly, that the humanity He assumed from Mary was identical with ours except for sin. Following the line, "For us and for our salvation, He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man," the *Hermeneia* adds this crucial codicil:[19]

> (…) by whom He took body, soul and mind and everything that is in man, truly and not in semblance.

The addition is clearly designed to refute any notion that the humanity assumed by the Son of God was in any way deficient, as was variously claimed, for example, by the radical monophysites Apollinaris and Eutyches of Constantinople (both of whom are formally condemned by the Armenians). As well, the Armenians reject any suggestion that the human nature of God the Word was illusory or artificial; that the Christ only "seemed" human, as was professed by the so-called phantasiasts, and various neo-docetists that emerged among some monophysites in the aftermath of Chalcedon. Without stating it in those exact words, the Armenian Church professes here that the incarnate Logos was *homoousios* with humanity, just as the formula of Chalcedon asserts.

We turn now from these doctrinal-confessional statements to the more authentic realm of euchology and yet another prayer borrowed from the Byzantine Rite. The so-called Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom[20] and the celebrant's prayer accompanying the procession with the chalice in the *Badarak*, both contain the following passage, which elegantly ties the mystery of the incarnation to the Eucharistic sacrifice. The Armenian version reads:[21]

> None of us who are in the grips of bodily passions and desires is worthy to approach Your altar to minister to Your royal glory; for to serve You is great and awe-inspiring even for the heavenly powers. Yet because of Your immeasurable goodness, You, unbounded *Word of the Father, became human and You appeared as our high priest.* And as the Lord of all, You entrusted to us the priestly ministry of this bloodless sacrifice.

The Armenian version corresponds with the Greek text verbatim except for the absence in the former of the key stipulations, "without change and without alteration". The absence of these words does not imply any difference in Christology since elsewhere the Armenians hasten to emphasize that the assumption of a body and of human nature by God the Word occurs without

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[18] See Gabriele Winkler, "Eine bemerkenswerte Stelle im armenischen Glaubensbekenntnis: Credimus et in Sanctum Spiritum qui descendit in Jordanem et proclamavit missum," *Oriens Christianus* 63 (1979): 130-162.

[19] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 19.

[20] *The Divine Liturgy of Our Father Among the Saints John Chrysostom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) 23.

[21] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 24-25. Emphasis is mine. *The Divine Liturgy of Our Father Among the Saints John Chrysostom*, 23-24.

change or alteration (*arants popokhman yev arants aylaylootyan*),[22] most notably in the *Monogenes*, where the Christ is confessed to be *anpopokhelee* (unchangeable).[23]

Much more important is the Armenian Eucharistic Prayer, which opens with what must be considered one of the most arresting expositions anywhere of the mystery of the incarnation:[24]

> It is truly proper and right to worship and glorify You always, most eagerly and intently, Father Almighty. You removed the obstruction of the curse by Your imponderable Word, Your partner in Creation. Taking the Church to be his own people, He took all who believe in You as His own possession. It was his pleasure to dwell in us by means of a ponderable nature that He received from the Virgin. And as the divine architect building a new work, He turned this earth into heaven.
>
> Even the assemblies of vigilant angels could not bear to stand in His presence, frightened by the blinding light of His divinity flashing like lightning. Yet the Word, becoming human for our salvation, gave us the privilege to sing with the heavenly ones in their spiritual choirs. So that in one voice with the seraphim and the cherubim, we should sing the Song of the Holies and, confidently calling out, shout with them and say, "Holy, holy, holy Lord of powers…"

What first strikes the eye of one familiar with the structure of ancient Eucharistic Prayers is that our prayer barely mentions God the Father before definitively turning to the Person and work of Jesus Christ. The vast majority of Eucharistic Prayers of the so-called "West Syrian" or "Antiochene" type—to which the Armenian Eucharistic Prayer and the Byzantine Eucharistic Prayers of St. John Chrysostom, Basil the Great and James of Jerusalem all belong—open with an extended acclamation of God the Father and the gift of Creation. Prayers of this type reserve any mention of the second Person of the Holy Trinity until much later in the course of the prayer. Here, by contrast, we see illustrated once again the Christological preoccupation of the Armenian Rite.

Noteworthy is the prayer's early attribution to St. Athanasius of Alexandria, just like the Armenian version of the Nicene Creed. The authorship of either a creed or a Eucharistic Prayer by the fourth-century hero of the Council of Nicaea being unattested elsewhere, most scholars have rejected both attributions.[25] Yet the Armenians' attachment of his name to both their Christologically-fortified version of the Creed and their Eucharistic Prayer must be due to the obvious resonance between the Christological emphasis and imagery of these texts with that of Athanasius' influential work, *On the Incarnation of the Word*.

Indeed, in the classic high Alexandrian fashion, the Armenian Eucharistic Prayer asserts that the salvation of humanity is entirely rooted in the Incarnation of God the Word. That mystery erupts between the poles of God's "*imponderable* Word", the divine and heavenly agent of humanity's liberation

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[22] In the longer creed attributed to St. Gregory of Datev (†1410), which appears in the Armenian Book of Hours, the *Zhamagirk'*, *The Book of Hours of the Holy Church of Armenia* (Jerusalem: Saints James Press, 1955) (in Armenian).

[23] See the text above.

[24] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 29-30.

[25] Hans-Jürgen Feulner, *Die Armenische Athanasius-Anaphora: Kritische Edition, Übersetzung und Liturgievergleichender Kommentar*, Anaphorae Orientales 1, Anaphorae Ameniacae 1 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2001), 459-460.

from its grave state, and the "*ponderable* nature that He received from the Virgin" Mary. When the "imponderable" becomes "ponderable", the Incarnate Word restores humanity's fatal condition by taking mankind to be his very own possession, by grafting it onto himself. The Incarnate Word brings about salvation by bridging the chasm that resulted between God and humanity as a consequence of "the curse". No longer is God's Word an invisible, x-ray-like emanation of the Divine, but a living, breathing, human being, whom the Father sends into the world, into human history, for the purpose of redeeming it. God effectively takes hold of God's creatures to return humanity to its heavenly source and intended glory. In this way, borrowing an image of St. Paul, the prayer designates Jesus as "a divine master-builder" [1Cor. 3:10] who "turned this earth into heaven".

The entire thrust of the prayer, and with it, the Armenians' understanding of the Incarnation, emanates from the shockingly impossible reality of the God-man, the *Theanthropos*, by whom, and in whom, the world is redeemed. The utterly irreconcilable, diametric poles of God and humanity, heaven and earth, imponderable and ponderable, are reconciled in the incarnate Word. While the staggering intensity of his divinity blinded even the angels, "yet" He became human for our salvation: If God does not become truly human, then there is no "yet" [*sagayn*]. As a consequence, humanity is promoted, in and through the Incarnate Word, to the choir of the Seraphim and the Cherubim, to sing "with them" their signature hymn of praise, "Holy, holy, holy". When humans and angels sing to God in symphony, then this earth has in fact become heaven, salvation is laid bare, and theosis is achieved.

The consequences of the incarnation are played out as the remainder of the Eucharistic Prayer unfolds. In particular, following the Sanctus, where Eucharistic Prayers of the West Syrian type inevitably turn from the Father to the economy of the Son of God, our prayer probes more deeply still into the Person of Jesus Christ:[26]

> And at the end of these days, tearing up the sentence of condemnation for the totality of our debts, You gave us Your only-begotten Son, both debtor and debt, immolation and anointed, lamb and heavenly bread, high priest and sacrifice; for He is distributor and He himself is distributed always in our midst without being ever consumed. For having become human truly and without illusion, and having taken body, through union without confusion, from the Mother of God, the holy Virgin Mary, He journeyed through all the passions of our human life without sin and came willingly to the world-saving cross, which was the occasion of our redemption.

Inspired by Hebrews 1:1-2 and Colossians 2:13-15, the prayer opens with yet another resounding proclamation of the central paradox of the incarnation, now extended to its necessary and inevitable conclusion. Mirroring the kenotic hymn of Philippians 2:6-8, the suffering and death of the Son of God are presented as the consummation of the Incarnation. In death, the Son of God has indeed become man in every way except sin. A chain of stark antitheses—"debtor and debt, immolation and anointed, lamb and heavenly bread, high

[26] *Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church*, 30.

priest and sacrifice"—identifies, in a manner that only the language of paradox can, *who* this "only-begotten Son" really *is*, whom God "gave us".

The next sentence is a restatement of the first, a recapitulation using more conventional Christological language: God's Son became "man truly and without illusion, and having taken body, through union without confusion, from the Mother of God, the holy Virgin Mary". God the Word, therefore, became one with humanity through a "union without confusion," a favourite phrase in the writings of St. Cyril of Alexandria,[27] who uses it often to repel any notion that the incarnate Word's humanity was displaced, overwhelmed or compromised by the divine nature. Such a mingling of natures, one or both losing their integrity in the union and thus, perhaps, forging for the Christ a new mongrel nature that was neither fully human nor fully divine, was a primary concern of the fathers of Chalcedon. Perceiving any monophysitic doctrine to be particularly vulnerable to such misrepresentation, they guarded against it in the first of the famous adverbs of the Chalcedonian definition: "*without confusion*, without change, without division, without separation". The stipulation in the Armenian Eucharistic Prayer is therefore most significant.

Many more texts from the *Badarak* could surely be adduced, which would shine additional light on the Armenian Church's traditional confession and living witness of Jesus the Lord and Christ as being truly God and truly Man, without mixture or separation. But even the few excerpts examined here should suffice to corroborate the appraisal of another eminent participant in the unofficial dialogues of the 1960's and 1970's. The erudite Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan wrote:[28]

> When we examine the sacraments of our [Eastern and Oriental Orthodox] Churches and specially the Eucharist, there we find no cause or occasion for division. Our Christology professed directly and indirectly in our liturgical, and generally [in our] sacramental life has not given rise to any controversy of significance.

The Archbishop continues,[29]

> The question then arises: if problems of monophysitism or dyophisitism do not arise in our sacramental and liturgical practice, why should certain propositions framed by a council or councils be allowed to disturb the real, existential unity of the Church in the most vital area of its life?

May this short survey be of some service to the formal recognition of that "real, existential unity of the Church".

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[27] See, for example, *St. Cyril of Alexandria On the Unity of Christ*, translated and with an introduction by John Anthony McGuckin (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 77, *et passim*.

[28] Nersoyan, "Problems of Consensus in Christology," 158.

[29] Ibid., 159.

# The Christological Faith of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as Reflected in its Liturgy

*Getatchew Haile*

We, on the other hand, believe that the body of Christ
is created from the root of Adam and Eve;
but in His divinity, he is the molder of Adam and the creator of Eve.
*Giyorgis of Gasitsha*

[I say] with prostration,
"Glory to Your conception in the womb to take flesh and soul".
*An anonymous hymn of daily prayer to Jesus Christ*

A review of the religious literature of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church, including the part composed by native teachers, reveals how much the Church's major concern has been the protection of the faith by the early Fathers. The faith, as defined by the pre-Chalcedon Fathers, is that Christ is both perfect man and perfect God without mixing His human and divine natures, and performing every act as man and God at the same time. The Church rejects the notion that some of His acts are ascribed to His divinity and others to His humanity. It also rejects, equally, the heresy of Eutyches who taught that the Christ is only divine with His humanity assumed by His divinity or that His physical body is from heaven. The fact that the Ethiopian Orthodox feast day of the Annunciation is called *Təsbə`t* "Incarnation" (of the Word) says it all. This article limits its review to the liturgical literature of the Church, which would include the Missal and the daily and annual praise hymns, especially the *Dəgg$^{w}$a*.

*The Anaphoras*

The purpose of this review of a limited part of the Church's liturgy is to show how the faith, especially the belief that Christ is perfect man and perfect God, is continuously confessed. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has over fourteen Anaphoras. But sufficiency of the evidence witnessed in any of them limits the number selected for the review.

The naming of most of the individual anaphoras itself is of significance: The Anaphora of the Apostles and the Anaphora of Our Lord are so named as an acceptance and declaration of the canonicity of their sources, the *Synodicon* and the *Testament of Our Lord*, respectively. Dedicating two or three of them to Mary, Mother of God, is a recognition that she is the mother in flesh of the Only-Begotten-Son of God, an affront to Nestorius who did not want to call her Theotokos. For the local teachers, it is John Chrysostom—to whom one of the Anaphoras was dedicated—who gave the right interpretation to "[Joseph] did not know [Mary] until she had born her firstborn Son", (*Mt.* 1:25), and who confronted Nestorius by showing respect to a woman's genitals when the latter said that he cannot say that God has come from a womb through it. The

dedication of an Anaphora to each of John Son of Thunder, the Three Hundred and Eighteen Fathers of Nicaea, Athanasius of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria, and Dioscorus is self-explanatory. These are the theologians who defined the Orthodox faith the Church preaches. Furthermore, in the prayer called Absolution of the Son, the Lord is supplicated to absolve the sin of all by the mouth of these Fathers.[1] Mary, too, as the Mother of God, from whom Christ took our body, has a prominent place in this section.[2]

*The Pre-Anaphora*

The prayer of the priest over the chalice:

> O Lord our God, Jesus Christ who is truly God was made man, Whose godhead was never separated from His manhood, who shed His blood willingly for the sake of His handiwork, lay Your holy hand upon this chalice.[3]

Let the sub priest say:

> Blessed is the Only-Begotten-Son (of God), Our Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of Our Lady Mary, for our salvation.[4]

Let the priest say (about the Virgin Mary):

> (You are) the golden censer who carried the charcoal of fire which the blessed one took from the sanctuary, and which forgives sin and abolishes trespasses, who is the Word of God that became man (taking flesh) from you, who offered himself to His Father as an incense and an acceptable sacrifice".[5]

The laity:

> In the beginning was the Word; the same Word was the Word of God. The same Word became flesh and dwelled upon us. And we beheld His glory, the glory of the Only-Begotten-Son of His Father. The Word of the Father is living, and is a life-giving Word. The Word of God is risen, and His flesh was not corrupted.[6]

The Creed of the Apostles is part of the pre-Anaphora, and includes the following:

> One God, Father of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who was begotten before the creation of the world, the Only-Begotten Son, equal with Him, creator of all the hosts, the principalities and the dominions, who in the last days was pleased to become man, and took the flesh from Our Lady Mary, the holy Virgin, without the seed of man, and grew like men yet without sin or trespasses, neither with guile found in His mouth. Then He suffered, died in the flesh, rose from the dead on the third day, ascended unto heaven to the Father who sent Him, sat down at the right hand of Power, sent to us the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, who

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[1] መጽሐፈ፡ ቅዳሴ። በ ግዕዝና፡ በ አማርኛ። ፲፱፻፶፩ ዓመተ፡ ምሕረት። አዲስ፡ አበባ። (*Mäṣḥafä Qəddase bä Gə'əz-ənna bä Amarəñña*, 1951 EC) [hereafter: MQ followed by page and paragraph numbers] 25, 61-4; Marcos Daoud and Marsie Hazen, *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa, 1954 and Cairo (Egypt), 1959), [hereafter: MM], 25-6, 61-4. These two books will be our major sources on the Liturgy.

[2] *MQ* 39, 155-61; MM 39-40, 155-61.

[3] Cf. MM 12-13, 45.

[4] *MQ* 30, 103; MM 31, 103.

[5] *MQ* 33, 121-2; MM 34, 121-3.

[6] *MQ* 47, 216; cf. MM 47, 216.

proceeded from the Father,[7] and saved the whole world, and who is co-eternal with the Father and Son (...) We also believe that Christ is not in the least degree inferior because of his incarnation, but He is God, the Word truly became man, and reconciled mankind to God being the High-priest of the Father.[8]

*Anaphora of the Apostles*

The celebrating priest makes this confession about the Communion he has prepared:

> I believe, I believe, I believe, and I trust, to the last breath, that this (oblation) is the body and blood of Our Lord and Our God and Our Saviour Jesus Christ, which He took from the Lady of us all, the holy Mary of twofold virginity, and made it one with His Godhead without mixture or confusion, without division or alteration; and He verily confessed with a good testimony in the days of Pontius Pilate, and He gave it up for our sakes and for the sake of the life of us all.
>
> I believe, I believe, I believe, and I trust that His divinity was not separated from His manhood, not for an hour nor for the blink of an eye, but He gave it up for our sakes, for life and for salvation, and for the remission of sins to those who partake of it in faith.
>
> I believe, I believe, I believe, and I trust that this (oblation) is the body and blood of Our Lord and Our God and Our Savior Jesus Christ. This is He who is rightly due honor and glory and adoration with his kind heavenly Father and the life-giving Holy Spirit, both now and always and forever. Amen.[9]

For some reason, the words in some anaphoras that the priest says when offering the Communion are put together here within the Anaphora of the Apostles for the priest to say the corresponding words. All are of sound theology of Orthodox Christianity.

1. When using the Anaphora of the Lord: "The body of Our Lord Jesus Christ for the sanctification of body, soul, and spirit".
2. When with the Anaphora of the Apostles (and of John Son of Thunder): "The bread of life which came down from heaven, the holy body of Christ".
3. When with the Church doctors: "The body of Emmanuel our very God, which He truly took from Mary, the Lady of us all".[10]

The second might look ambiguous, but it is a reference to John 6: 33-41 where Christ said, "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world (...) I am that bread of life". The third is as sound as it could be. It soundly stands against the heresies of both Nestorius and Eutyches.

*The Anaphora of the Lord*

The priest:

> "Through Your will, Your Only-Begotten Son, Jesus, was crucified for our salvation. Through the Word of your covenant, you did all, being pleased with him. And you sent him

[7] The Anaphora of the Three Hundred ands, "and took from the Son".

[8] MQ 52, 36-8 and 43; MM 52, 36-8, and 43.

[9] MQ 68, 101-3; MM 66, 101-3.

[10] MQ 70, 115; MM 68-9, 115.

into the womb of a virgin. He was conceived in the womb; He became flesh; and his birth was made known by the Holy Spirit".[11]

The Mystagogia or *Təmhərtä Ḫəbu`at* (Doctrina Arcanorum) is, theologically, the most important part of the *Covenant of Our Lord* and the priest is ordered to ask the people to recite it before Liturgy starts. It starts as follows: *Mystagogia* is the Faith that our Lord Jesus Christ our God taught to *His Disciples*. The *Faithful* shall recite it before the Holy *Anaphora*. Who is, Who was, Who abideth forever, Who cometh, Who died, and was buried and risen (and) was glorified by God. Who loosened the bonds of Death (and) rose from the dead not two, *but* one God, and Who became Man without change. Who reigned over the *body* of Adam through the Holy *Spirit* (and) made him living. Who *clothed* (Himself) with Adam who was dead, (and) rose (and) ascended *with His Body* into the Heavens. Who conquered Death (and) broke his bonds; (and) the *Devil* was shamed who had been lord and king over us for a long time (and) He was broken. By His sufferings and His *power* He burst [the Devil's] *bonds*, (and) because [Death's] face was filled with darkness, He feared (and) was troubled when he saw the *Only-Begotten* Son of God *clothed* in the *flesh* from the *Virgin*, descending into Shades.[12]

*The Anaphora of the John Son of Thunder*

John is traditionally called Theologian, an appellation he earned from the way he reported to Christ in his Gospel. The anaphora ascribed to him is equally theological. He starts it with, "(O Lord) You have existed from before the foundation of the world and will exist forever", and goes on describing the ever-living God and the nature of His Trinity.

The following relatively lengthy quotation is the author's exposé on the Son of God who was born as the Son of Mary:

> He was conceived in the womb, unconfined (by it); He abided in the womb, unlimited (by its space). The creator of all of the flesh lived in the womb. He who sits upon the Cherubim abided in a daughter of flesh. The consuming fire put on flesh. The subtle Spirit has been clothed with flesh. He was born from the hidden unto the open. He who forms infants in the womb became an infant. They wrapped with clothes Him who was clothed in light. He dwelt in the house of the poor as poor. As a King He sent messengers to bring Him presents from afar. He who makes the cow know its owner slept in a manger. He grew up as a child and they worshipped Him as the Lord of all. He walked as a man while acting as God. He was willingly hungry as a son of man, and satiated many hungry people with little bread as all-powerful. He was thirsty as one who dies, and changed the water into wine as a life-giver to all. He slept as the children of flesh; He woke up and rebuked the winds as a creator. He wearied and rested as the humble, and walked upon the water as the Most High. They beat him on the head as a slave and He set us free from the yoke of sin as Lord of all. He endured all. He who healed the blind with His spittle and gave us the Holy Spirit received the spittle of the unclean. They accused as a sinner He who forgives sin. They judged the judge of judges; He was crucified on a wooden cross to abolish sin. He was counted with criminals to enroll us with the righteous. He died of His own will, and was buried with His consent. He died to kill

[11] MQ 83, 27-9; MM, 82, 27-9.

[12] Oswald Hugh Ewart Burmester, "The Coptic and Arabic versions of the Mystagogia," *Le Muséon* 46 (1933): 203-35 here at 203-4. See also Frank H. Halloch "The Ethiopic Version of the Mystagogia," *Le Muséon*, 53 (1940): 65-76, here at 68-9.

death. He died to give life to the dead. He was buried to raise those who were buried, to keep the living, to purify the impure, to justify the sinners, to gather together those who were scattered, and to turn the sinners to glory and honour.[13]

*The Anaphora of Our Lady Mary*

The priest:

> O Virgin, full of grace, with whom and with what likeness shall we liken you? You are the loom from whom Emmanuel took His ineffable garment of flesh. He made the warp from the original flesh as that of Adam, and the woof is your flesh. The shuttle is the Word himself, Jesus Christ. The length of the warp over it is the shadow of the Most High. The weaver is the Holy Spirit.[14]
>
> Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, from whom is found every good gift and every perfect gift, became man, fulfilled all the law of man yet without sin, and learned the law of the Hebrews. He was baptized by John, tempted in the wilderness; He hungered and thirsted, and worked miracles. In the same night in which He gave his soul to death, He showed his disciples many signs concerning His sufferings, His crucifixion, His death, and His resurrection on the third day with body and soul, with bone and blood, as it was before when His disciples were with him on his right and left'.[15]
>
> O this sign of the cross (on the host) separated from this host without being separated or alienated, but its appearance, taste, and softness are the same. As His divinity was not separated or alienated from His humanity so also this sign of the cross is not separated or alienated from this host. Likewise, also let your greatness be united with our humility, and our humility with your greatness.[16]

*The Anaphora of the Three Hundred*

This Anaphora is dedicated to the 318 Nicene Fathers who defined the Christian creed. Therefore, one would expect in it an unequivocal theological statement. Its author starts describing one aspect of the creator: "There is no time in which He was not, and there is no place where He cannot be found; there is no time when he was perfectly seen in his divinity. No one can see Him, and no one knows how He lives".[17]

The priest:

> "God the Father sent His Only-Begotten-Son to abide in the flesh of a young woman who does not know a husband. The creator of infants was kept in the womb unlimited (by its space). He became man while he was God; He was born while He was divine fire. He was brought up, not with adornment or honour, but as the children of the poor. He grew up disciplined greatly, obeying his parents.[18]

In the Prayer of Fraction, we have this attack of Eutyches's heresy:

> Remember that the body that You took from the holy Virgin is our body, not one that You brought down from heaven. Remember that the body that You took from the holy Virgin is the body that stood before Pilate. Remember that the body that You took from the holy Virgin is the body that endured the tight bonds. Remember that the body that You took from the holy

[13] MQ 94-5, 32-40; MM 92-3, 32-40.

[14] MQ 110, 29; MM 107, 29.

[15] MQ 118, 97-8; MM 114, 97-8.

[16] MQ 121, 132-3; MM 117, 132-3.

[17] MQ 127, 14; MM 123, 14.

[18] MQ 134, 77; MM, 130, 77.

> Virgin is the body that suffered and died. Remember that the body that You took from the holy Virgin is the body that rose from the dead on the third day. Remember that the body that You took from the holy Virgin is the body that ascended into heaven in glory and sat at the right side of His Father. Again God our God will come in this body in the power of his divinity.[19]

*The Anaphora of John Chrysostom*

After a rather long description of the nature of God, the priest proclaims how the Son of God came to us, the earthly:

> Again, we proclaim the existence of the Only-Begotten, how is and how was His descent, and how He was born: He came without going out of His Father; He came down without leaving His position; He travelled without alienating Himself from the Trinity; He came down without breaking His unity; and He dwelt in a daughter of flesh without leaving His throne. He was conceived in the womb, without letting there be any place that was not full of Him, He was kept in the womb without making subtraction above, and was born without making addition beneath. He became perfect man without sin, and appeared like a slave while acting like God, as the preachers of His Gospel have witnessed.[20]

*From the Wəddase Maryan "Praises of Mary"*

*Monday:*

> He sprang forth in the flesh (He took) from the Virgin, without the seed of man and saved us. He who came is the One who is, and who will be; and He will come again. This is the Word, Jesus Christ, who became man from You. He became perfect man without change. The Only-Begotten Son was neither alienated nor separated in all His deeds [*gəbr*]. The Word of God is of the same [i.e. similar] appearance [*ra'əy*], of the same essence [or nature, *həllawe*] and of the same divinity.

*Tuesday:*

> The crown of our boast, the first of our salvation, and the foundation of our purity happened by the Virgin Mary, who, for us, gave birth to the Word of God, who became human for our salvation. Even though He became truly man, He is perfect God. Therefore, she bore Him while she was virgin. The power of her birth is ineffable.

*Anqäṣä Bərhan "Gate of Light":*

> You became the hall of the holy things, the temple of the holy of holies, the curtain of light, and the inexplicable throne of glory. We likened you, O Holy Mary, to the temple of the holy of holies because the Holy Spirit who came upon you and the power of the Most High overshadowed you. And to the curtain of light because the Word of the Father, who is Jesus Christ our salvation, was hidden in your womb (...) When the Cherubim saw Him wearing our flesh that He took from you, they worshipped, saying, "He has a liking for the son of man".

*From the "Image Hymns" (Mälk'at)*

These are hymns honouring the saints of the Church by praising parts of their bodies in stanzas of five rhyming lines. One occasionally finds lines expressing the faith the Church teaches about incarnation of the Word. Here are a few examples

[19] MQ 139, 121-6; MM, 134, 121-6.

[20] MQ 206, 24-9; MM, 200, 24-9. This declaration is followed by the Trisagion.

## 1. Image of Emmanuel:

Peace to your taking (body) from her pure body,
From the holy Virgin full of grace,
And also soul from the soul of perfect virginity,
O my God, who is called Emmanuel,
By the mouth of Angel Gabriel, announcer of joy.

Peace to your wearing the body of Mary like a garment,
And also for your being carried in the heart of a narrow womb,
Nine months and five days.
How was your being carried in the body of a small damsel,
While you are fiery, O Jesus Christ.

Peace to Your Resurrection, which was
Life for the righteous and damnation for the sinners.
O Emmanuel, the first-born, by Your wearing our flesh,
You demolished for us the wall of strife,
As Paul, our brother, has said.

## 2. Image of Jesus Christ:

Peace to Your head, which is mounted on the throne of neck,
Wearing the skin of the flesh and is veiled in hair.
O Jesus Christ, as your word informs,
Because of You the wretched of the world will inherit glory;
And the first will be the last.

Peace to your heart, which is near the twin kidneys,
Through which moves the spirit of mind to nature,
O Jesus Christ, who is perfect divinity and incarnation,
When Nineveh falls for You avenged,
Designate me an army in Your shrine.

Peace to the corps of Your body, which was not separated from its divinity,
Even for a moment of the short blink of the eyes.
O Christ, the treasure of pearl, who does not experience change.
(I offer) neither a rose of a sea shore or pearl of the sea,
But I offer You my price(less) faith.

## 3. Image of the Assumption of Mary

Peace to the Assumption of your body to which God was united
And by your movement (to it), Judea
Shared the glory of Jerusalem.
Memorial Frankincense and pure fragrant perfume
The kings of Tarshish and the islands have brought as present.

## 4. Image of the Praises of Mary

The Lord willed to set Adam free,
When He made your pure body His garment.
O Mary, who is ready to have mercy and give comfort,
Salve me with a perfume of righteousness and make me a perfect fragrant,
With your right hand holding (me).

When the Word [lit. Jesus Christ] dwelt in you,
He united your pure body with His divinity.
O Virgin, when we offer a song to your Assumption,

Save (us) from the tribulation of this city,
And other cities.

Isaiah saw the mystery of Emmanuel,
As the curtain of your body veiling him.
O Virgin Mary, the queen of peace and love,
I raise a song to your honour and beat the drum,
When I offer singing to your name.

The victorious God, who is and will be,
Came in your flesh and will be coming again.
O Mary, who hears the prayer of the poor,
Raise your power to guard me,
Lest the hater do evil to me.

Your true light gives a perfect light
To all people who live in the world,
O Mary who became the mother of God,
As a thirsty earth hopes for rain,
I hope your mercy stands up perfectly.

### *The Dəgg$^{w}$a*

The *Dəgg$^{w}$a* is hymnody containing five kinds of hymns, chanted at different occasions and feasts of the liturgical year.[21]

#### 1. From the *Ziq*, on Nativity

We preach the Son from the seed of David,
Who came and was born in the body of mankind.
He dwelt in the womb of the Virgin without absenting Himself
from the throne of His glory.
He became flesh and was born.
The diligent believe His birth and the Seraphim stand at His court.
He came into the world to ransom us, to give us peace.
They bring presents as offerings.[22]

#### 2. Zəmmare zä-Maryam

I call you My Lady,
And I call you the Mother of My Lord.
I do not write a new commandment regarding you.
For you have been a bridge before God and the abode of the Holy Spirit.
For the Word of the Father has consented (and) willed to be mankind through you.
He dwelt in you and was born by you.
Now what should I say about Mary, the foundation of righteousness!
He dwelt in her. He commanded the cloud above.
He willed to appear as from the clouds.
The Word became man and was incarnated from her.
He cleansed her body and dwelt in her and was born by her. [23]

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[21] Published in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, several times in several forms. One of them is አምስቱ፡ ጸዋትው፡ ዜማዎች። አዲስ አበባ ፲፱፻፶፭ ዓ ፡ ም። (1965 EC) [hereafter: ASZ (1965 EC)]. The other is መጽሐፈ ዚቅ፡ አዲስ አበባ ፲፱፻፶፬ዓ ፡ ም። (1964 EC) [hereafter: MZ (1964 EC)].

[22] ASZ (1965 EC), 302; MZ (1964 EC), 54.

[23] ASZ (1965 EC), 491-3.

3. Mäwaśə´t zä-Maryam

He sent his Only-Begotten Son, and he became man from you.
He came out from your womb, wearing our body,
And gave us the Holy Spirit and made us His co-inheritors.
He brought us near His Father.[24]

At the time when the survival of Church of Christ is at stake, it is incumbent upon ecclesiastical authorities to forge the much-needed unity of the Apostolic Churches by accepting what the other party says as to what it believes instead of accusing it of what it does not. The ancient false accusation that Saint Cyril complained of must come to an end.[25]

[24] ASZ (1965 EC), 594.

[25] In a letter he sent to John of Antioch, Cyril said, "They belch words of violence about me that I have said and believe that the holy body of Christ came down from heaven, and not from the Holy Virgin". The letter is extant only in Gə´əz, see Bernard Manuel Weischer, "Qērellos IV 1: Homilien und Briefe zum Konzil von Ephesos," *Äthiopistiche Forschungen*, 4 (1979): 153-69.

# Part III:
# Chalcedon and Practical Dialogue

# Visits to Oriental Orthodox Monasteries from Armenia to Ethiopia (1998- 2014)*

*Archimandrite Antony Novitskiy*

*When did you begin to visit Oriental Orthodox churches and monasteries and meet their people? Why did you make these trips?*

When I went to Israel in 1998 with some monks and pilgrims from Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, we first landed in Cairo, and from there we took a bus to the Holy Land. In Egypt I wanted to meet Christians-African Copts, in order to see their life, especially their monastic life. I was very interested in that. And so I first visited Cairo and made trips to the monasteries of St. Anthony and St. Paul of Thebes, near the Red Sea. I took a record of all objects of worship I saw there. I wanted to see the real Egyptian monastic life of today because Egypt is the motherland of monasticism. I was there again in 2014 in the fall. To read about it is one thing, but people have to go there and see with their own eyes and meet the people.

*Please give a short list of the countries and some monasteries you visited.*

In 2000 - 2007 I was in Egypt six times. I visited some Egyptian monasteries several times: St. Paul and St. Anthony, the White Monastery and the Red Monastery, the St. Abraham Monastery; the monasteries of the Nitrian desert (St. Bishoy, the monastery called of the Syrians, St. Macarius the Great; Al Baramus) and the monastery of St. Menas near Alexandria; and also the Coptic monastery of St. George in Old Cairo. In Egypt, nearly all the monasteries are Coptic Orthodox.

I was only once in Ethiopia (2006). There was a visit to a monastery at the time of a pilgrimage with thousands of people attending. Also I saw a women's monastery in Lalibela.

I visited Armenia once and Bishop Georgi drove me to the monastery of St. Gregory and to other churches and monasteries.

In India, where St. Apostle Thomas preached Christianity, I had a short visit in Kerala (in 2008), including the seminary in Kottayam.

In Syria (in 2004) I visited St. Ephrem the Syrian Orthodox seminary in Saydnaya where some monks live, teach and study.

*Did you speak of theology with the Oriental Orthodox/non Chalcedonian monks you met? Did you understand that they are not monophysite, that they believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man, without mixture or separation?*

It is not my business to define whether they are monophysite or not; this is the task of the theologians. Once in the monastery of St. Macarius, Father Irineus showed us images of crosses with two leaves in the cupola, from the

* [Editor's note:] This is the text of an interview which took place in Kiev in 2014, thanks to Lidiya Lozova who made the interview with questions prepared by Christine Chaillot.

fourth century. He told us they symbolized the two natures in Christ. Some monks in Kiev-Pechersk Lavra called me a heretic just because I visited Oriental churches and monasteries...

*What did you understand of the life, liturgical life, spiritual life and monastic life and faith of the Coptic people and monks you met?*

I did not participate in their liturgical life nor did I attend a liturgy. The monks pray in church during the night. At the White Monastery in Suhag, in Upper Egypt, it was impressive to see the great number of faithful visiting the monasteries and praying there. In large monasteries the number of monks is more than 100. We were quite impressed to learn that hermitic life still flourishes in Coptic monasteries. The spiritual life in the Coptic monasteries and parishes is very elevated. I wish I could live one month with them to see and better understand their life.

In Cairo, when we entered the Coptic Orthodox Cathedral of St. Mark the Apostle, when I saw how the faithful lived and prayed with much dedication, how they preserved Christianity in the midst of the Islamic world, how they rejoiced that Our Lord Jesus Christ once walked on their land (Flight to Egypt), I had such a spiritual elevation that I still live by these memories. I understood that they are real dedicated Christians and spiritual people. We always had a very warm welcome there, and I can testify to their great piety. They kept their ancient spirituality. Simplicity and spirituality adorn their life. When I talked to these ancient Christians, I understood that they are such kind people and never proud. When I was flying back home to Kiev, I was in such a high spiritual mood that I wanted to fly directly to Heaven. I hope to visit these Oriental Christians and monks again. To see and meet them is a lesson in Christianity.

# Liturgical Life, Dialogue and Encounters

*Pr. Archimandrite Avksentii Delipapazov*

Since the 1960s, a dialogue has been established between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the non-Chalcedonian (nowadays also called Oriental Orthodox) Churches (Armenian, Syrian Orthodox, Coptic, Ethiopian, Indian Malankara, and recently also the Eritrean) that is aimed at establishing mutual understanding and rapprochement.

Part of the dialogue includes the study of mutual liturgical heritage, and liturgy itself. There is no better bridge for the dialogue. The two families of Churches have common liturgical texts used interchangeably for shorter and longer periods of time in each Church tradition. In fact, a liturgical tradition that is common or similar is a guarantee for both families of Churches for finding mutual trust and full convergence, including at a theological level.

I wrote my doctoral thesis on "The Byzantine and the Alexandrian Liturgies of St. Basil the Great", that is on two Anaphoras used by the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Greek Byzantine Churches until now. I began this research at the Institute of Coptic Studies in Cairo and finished it at the Theological Faculty of Sofia University. In 1993 I became a docent at the Faculty of Orthodox theology in Veliko Tarnovo after presenting my research on the Alexandrian liturgy of St. Apostle Mark (in Bulgarian). In 2015 I defended my thesis on "The Greco-Alexandrian liturgy of St. Gregory the Theologian. Historical and Liturgical Analysis".

After reading and studying many liturgical texts of the Coptic Orthodox Church (and also those of the Sister Oriental Orthodox Churches), I came to the understanding that they showed a correct and Orthodox teaching and Christology.

As a priest, liturgist and professor of liturgy, I can testify that their liturgies and prayers are quite similar to those of the Eastern Orthodox, even if the words of the texts may be different. The liturgical action is also similar.

During my travels since the 1990s, I have had the opportunity to become acquainted with the life, and liturgical life, of some Oriental Orthodox Churches such as the Coptic Church in Egypt, the Malankara Church in India, the Armenian Church (in Egypt and Bulgaria) and the Syrian Orthodox Church (in Syria and Lebanon).

It is my opinion that, in the context of our theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, to study their liturgical texts is the best and quickest way to overcome doubts and differences inherited from the past about their faith, including their Christology. As a matter of fact, not only are all their texts Orthodox in content, but these very texts have been prayed repeatedly by the patriarchs, bishops, clergy, faithful, monks and nuns since the separation of Chalcedon in 451. This is the best proof of the expression of Orthodox faith by all the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

Unfortunately, today, "what should unite the Churches of the Christ (the liturgy), separates them, or at least appears as a visible expression of their

dispute".[1] As it is stated in *Romans* 9:32: "Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were based on works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone".

I was surprised at a relational level, by the love, benevolence and the care with which I was welcomed by all the Oriental Orthodox prelates, clergy, monks and faithful I met; and I tried to reciprocate accordingly. The more I met them along the years (and in different places), the more obvious it became to me that, at the parish level, many faithful and clergy have overcome their Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian differences. Sometimes, in some places, Eucharistic communion was shared. In fact, this has been allowed, for example, in the patriarchate of Antioch between the Greek Orthodox and the Syrian Orthodox faithful, according to an Agreement allowing intercommunion, signed in Damascus between the two patriarchates in 1991. As for the two Egyptian patriarchates of the Greek Orthodox and Coptic Orthodox Churches, they signed in Egypt an Agreement for the recognition of their mutual baptism and for the marriages between Orthodox Copts and Greek Orthodox back in 2001.[2]

In my country, Bulgaria, a large Armenian community has lived there for many centuries and is still active today with priests and parishes.[3] Mixed marriages between Bulgarians and Armenians are common. From 2011, Bulgaria had to face a new problem: the influx of refugees fleeing war, especially from Syria and Iraq, including a small number of Eastern Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Christians. When they visit our Bulgarian Orthodox churches, they are supported by the Bulgarian priests. More importantly, they were not refused communion. All this makes me think that the unity between the two groups of Churches—Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian—has somehow already begun.

The Eastern Orthodox Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches share the same dogmatic heritage. Both groups profess the undamaged teaching bequeathed by the Lord Jesus Christ, strictly preserving the Apostolic Succession.

While I was speaking with prelates, clergy and the faithful of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, I learned that they themselves are also against the Monophysite heresy. The misunderstandings were both historical and Christological. Divergences in dogmatic formulations of both Church groups are terminological. The problem with terminology is highly dependent on interpretation. All the misunderstandings of the past can easily be overcome with willingness, effort and goodwill.

Much of the road to unity between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches has already been travelled, and differences and misunderstandings in Christological terminology clarified. For the two families of Churches, Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man, without mixture or separation.

In the context of theology and Church history, the terms are used to express not only ideas, but also truths—the eternal Truth of the Church. The problems of clarification of the terminology between Orthodox and Oriental

[1] Ernst Gaugler, "Das Abendmahl im Neuen Testament," *Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift* 3-4 (1942): 97.

[2] See the two texts in annex.

[3] See article by Nushev in this volume.

Orthodox Churches did not manage, until now, to reach the wanted and desired full unity. This confirms that the unity of the Church is not only the result of a clarified terminology but also of our action, in the spirit of love and unity. And this spirit is obviously still missing.

As Bishop Nicholas Makariopolski wrote: "The proud builders of the modern Tower of Babel are trying to extinguish the flames of the Holy Spirit by tearing the theanthropic (divine-human) body of the Church forgetting the words of the Founder 'that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us (...)' (John 17:21)".[4]

The doors leading to unity for both our sister Churches—Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian—are wide open. It is hard to imagine such unity in any other way than as our unity in faith, freed from all human prejudices and appendages. Our common sacred heritage testifies that divine truth can often be expressed in different ways and expressions, without breaking the unity in the name of Christ and of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Finally, let us remember Ephesians 2: 14-17:

> "For He (Christ) himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near".

It is my dearest hope that we shall soon reach full unity in every aspect, officially and formally.

[4] *The Holy Eucharist* (Sofia, 1968), 52.

# Dialogue Between the Armenian Community and the Eastern Orthodox Christians in Bulgaria

*Kostadin Nushev*

In Bulgaria, during communist times, ecumenical relations between Christians were considered a question of diplomacy. This may partly explain why, when the communist regime fell, there was a reaction to stop this type of "diplomatic" ecumenism. In the post communist time (perestroika), the Bulgarian Orthodox Church started to distance itself from official ecumenical contacts and in 1998 the Bulgarian Orthodox Church ceased contact with the World Council of Churches. In 2014, in Bulgaria, contacts with the Catholic and Protestant Churches existed only at the level of the protocole with the very active proselitism of some Protestants in Bulgaria being seen in a negative way.

On the other side, the contacts maintained with the Armenian Church and people have been peaceful and positive for centuries. Among the Oriental Orthodox (non Chalcedonian) Churches, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has traditionally kept the best relations with the Armenian Church mainly because of its diaspora which has lived since the Byzantine period in Thrace, in present Bulgaria, which explains their common long historical ties.

*Historical Relations between Eastern Orthodox and Armenians in Bulgaria*

Many Armenians arrived in Bulgaria in the 9th and 10th centuries. In the 11th century they chose as their centre Philippopolis (today Plovdiv), a town where they established a bishopric at the end of the 12th century. The oldest Armenian church built in Bulgaria was in Silistra in 1600 and the church in Roustchouk (today Rousse) was built in 1610. Around 1620 a wooden church was built in Sofia, the present capital, where a cathedral is now being built which will be the see of the Armenian spiritual leader of the community in Bulgaria.[1]

Under the Ottoman Empire, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, both Christian communities also shared a common historical destiny being then Christian communities under Muslim rulers, a factor which brought them closer to each other.

In the 18th century both Christian communities ran similar processes of cultural revival.[2]

In 1862, a first group of about thirty Bulgarians were sent into exile to Diyarbakir, today in Eastern Turkey, by the Ottoman authorities because they were fighting for the national freedom of Bulgaria. There the Armenian Father

[1] Christine Chaillot, *Vie et spiritualité des Eglises orthodoxes orientales* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011), 135.

[2] Archimandrite Abgar Hovakimian, "Armenian Church, Armenians and the Faith," in *Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Bulgaria (Calendar)* (Sofia, 2014), 4.

Agop Papazian managed to free them from their shackles and get them out of jail.[3] Also the Armenian bishop of Severek helped the Bulgarians who were arrested.

Later, after World War I, because of the 1915 genocide of the Armenian people in the Ottoman Empire, many Armenians were driven away from their ancestral homelands (present eastern Turkey); they were accepted as refugees in many countries in Europe and elsewhere, including in Bulgaria where they received Christian help, hospitality and protection.[4] It was the largest Armenian migration seen into Bulgaria, about 25.000. This is further compelling evidence of the fraternal relations between the Orthodox Christian Bulgarians and Armenians. To show their gratitude, the Armenians donated a golden cross to be found on the altar of the Orthodox cathedral of St. Alexander Nevski in Sofia; it was, in fact, made by the Armenian great-grandfather of Father Vasili Saryan. After the perstroika in the 1990s some Armenians came to Bulgaria, for economic reasons.

*The Armenian Apostolic Church in Bulgaria Nowadays*

In ecclesiastical and canonical terms, the Armenian Church communities in Bulgaria are under the supreme spiritual leadership of the Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, with its headquarters in Echmiadzin, in Armenia.[5]

In administration, Armenians in Bulgaria had their own separate bishop and diocese from 1921, then led by Archbishop Stepanes Hovagimyan.

In 1950 the seat was moved from Sofia to Bucharest and the Armenian Church of Bulgaria was then united with the Armenian Diocese of Romania. This structure of Church administration lasted until 1977 when the two dioceses were separated again as different ecclesiastical units.[6]

In 2011 the seat of the Armenian Diocese of Bulgaria moved back to Sofia. In 2014 the Diocese was governed by archimandrite Abgar Hovakimian from 2010 to 2013.[7] He was later replaced by Father Haratch Muradian.

Since 2014, the Armenian Apostolic Church in Bulgaria has its own organized religious communities with thirteen parishes and six priests for about 25.000 Armenians[8] in the twelve major Bulgarian cities: Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Burgas, Rouse, Shumen, Sliven, Stara Zagora, Pazardzhik, Haskovo, Dobrich and

[3] S. V. Ovnanyan, *Armenian-Bulgarian Historical Relationship* (Sofia, 1972), 10-20

[4] G. Bakalov, "The Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Historical Overview," in *Chronicle of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church* (Sofia, 2010). 70-79.

[5] Cf. Armand Basmajyan, *The Armenian Church* (Sofia, 2013). See also T. Koev, *Bulgarians and Armenian Church through the centuries* (Sofia, 2001) and M. Bogosian, *Armenians in Sofia* (Sofia, 1999), 5-10

[6] D. Mitev, *Inoslavni izpovedanija* (Heterodox Confessions) (Varna, 2005), 26 (in Bulgarian).

[7] Hovakimian, *Armenian Church*, 4-8.

[8] In Bulgaria, in 2014, there were almost 7 millions Orthodox Christians (76% of the population), with over 3000 parishes and about 1500 priests.

Silistra.[9] Some of the Armenian churches are built in the typical Armenian church architectural style.

Some Armenians became members of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. There are also mixed marriages between Bulgarian Orthodox and Armenian Christians.

*Official Relations of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Christian Community*

At present, in Bulgaria, there is no special or official inter-Church committee for theological dialogue or regular meetings between representatives of the two communities. At the official level, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church has maintained good inter-church relations with the representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church, especially during ceremonial and formal occasions.[10] For example, after the enthronement of the Bulgarian Patriarch Cyril in 1953, representatives of the Armenian community in Sofia donated a patriarchal crown to the Bulgarian First Hierarch for his liturgical ministry.[11]

In the present time, the fact of maintaining a relationship of dialogue and mutual good understanding is expressed, for example, on the occasion of certain religious holidays or for celebrations of Bulgarian historical events which are important for the two communities.

There are exchanges of several mutual visits of the prelates of the two Churches. For example, in 2007 (on the occasion of the anniversary of the 1915 Armenian genocide) the Bulgarian Patriarch Maxim sent a special letter to the Catholicos and Supreme Patriarch of the Armenians, Karekin II, expressing the official position of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church on this issue: this also confirmed Christian fraternal relations between the two Churches.[12] In response to this letter, in the beginning of 2008, the Armenian Catholicos-Patriarch Karekin II sent a letter to the Bulgarian Patriarch Maxim in which he confirmed the good Christian and brotherly relations between the two Churches.[13]

In 2012, an invitation was sent by the Armenian Catholicos to visit Armenia. An official delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, led by the then Metropolitan Kirill of Varna with Orthodox clergy and representatives of the Armenian Church in Bulgaria, went to Armenia and also visited the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of the Apostolic Armenian Church Karekin II.[14]

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[9] *Op. cit*., 17.

[10] Mitev, *Inoslavni izpovedanija*, 7-27.

[11] Bakalov, *The Bulgarian Orthodox Church*, 203-207.

[12] P. Spirova, "Svetia Sinod na BPC prizna genocida sreshtu armenskia narod" ("The Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church recognized the genocide against the Armenian people"), in *Dveri na Pravoslavieto*, 5 Dec. 2007.

[13] P. Spirova, "Blagodarstveno pismo ot Armenskia patriarch Karekin II do Negovo Svetejshestvo Patriarch Maxim" ("Thanksgiving Letter from the Armenian Patriarch Karekin II to His Holiness Patriarch Maxim"), in *Dveri na Pravoslavieto*, 6 Feb. 2008.

[14] The Metropolitan of Varna Cyril interrupted his visit to Armenia because of the death of the patriarch, in *Dveri na Pravoslavieto*, 7 Nov. 2012.

In higher theological schools of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the ecclesiastical issues related to the Armenian Apostolic Church are studied from the perspectives of Church history and dogmatic aspects, and also within the context of contemporary problems of Inter-Christian dialogue.[15]

In recent times some Armenian priests and deacons received their higher theological education in the theological seminaries and faculties of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Their presence in Bulgarian higher theological schools contributed to better mutual understanding between the Bulgarian Orthodox theologians and Armenians.

In conclusion, we can say that in Bulgaria the two families of Churches have known each other very well and have developed good inter-Christian brotherhood relationships, with much mutual fraternal respect. The Bulgarians feel that the Armenian Church is an apostolic Church, with ancient traditions, very close to the Orthodox Church in many aspects such as Church administration, canonical tradition, ecclesiology, liturgy and spirituality.[16]

[15] Cf. T. Koev, "Pogled varhu drevnite nacionalni iztochni cerkvi" ("An Overview on the Ancient Eastern National Churches") in *Duhovna Cultura* (1976): 10-19 fn. 2.

[16] In the Eastern Orthodox Church calendar, names of Armenian saints are found such as Gregory the Illuminator, Rhipsime and Gayana, the Forty-Five martyrs of Nicopolis in Armenia (4th c.) as well as many other saints of the first centuries.

# On Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Cooperation in Sweden and in the United States of America

*Michael Hjälm*

"The split of the Christian Church is a big mistake, a blasphemy of the Holy Spirit and an ignoring of the existence of Christ who promised: '(...) the gates of hell will not prevail against it' (Mt. 16:18). I invite you to stand before history for a moment to see the reason for our divisions. You will see that thousands of innocents have shed blood, righteous men have suffered and been expelled from their countries". The quotation stems from a lecture by the late Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I, which was given at the University of Humboldt in Berlin in 1995. The context is a reflection on the schism between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches[1] that has continued since 451, despite the fact that both sides have acknowledged a common understanding of Christology in the twentieth century. Research has also proven that the schism is based on misrepresentations and misunderstandings.[2] There are no obvious reasons for the unfulfilled unity, but as the previous Dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, John H. Erickson, remarked in his address 2005 in Sigtuna, Sweden:

> The chief reason for Christian division today is division itself. Whatever may have been the issues initially leading to division, a division once established very quickly takes on a life of its own, as each side tries to justify its own role in the division.[3]

In this article I will take a micro-perspective by investigating the particular context in Sweden and in the USA, in perspective of inter-Orthodox cooperation. There are more or less only two geographical spheres where we find a true encounter between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Middle East and in the Diaspora. If we examine the inter-Orthodox context in the diaspora, we can find interesting aspects.

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[1] I use the terminology of Eastern Orthodox Churches or the Eastern Orthodox Church for those Churches that acknowledge the Council of Chalcedon and Oriental Orthodox Churches for those churches that do not. I find the term Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian to be less appropriate since the dialogue has shown that Oriental Orthodox Churches could very well accept the Council of Chalcedon if the language of division is removed, and the Christology of Chalcedon is understood in the light of Constantinople 553. I also find the term pre-Chalcedonian Churches less appropriate since the Oriental Orthodox Churches are likewise post-Chalcedonian.

[2] Cf. Samuel, Vilakuvel Cherian, *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined: A Historical Theological Survey* (London, UK: British Orthodox Press, 2003. First published 1977 in India); Iain R. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon. Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998); Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (Translated Texts for Historians Volume 45, vol. 1) (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005).

[3] John H. Erickson, "Knowing the Past for Understanding the Future," Unpublished talk delivered at the Inter-Orthodox Conference "Christ He Who Is". Sigtuna, June 2-4, 2005 (courtesy to the author).

In the USA, the majority of the Orthodox population belongs to the Eastern Orthodox Church and among them the Greek Orthodox community is by far the largest.[4] When the Greeks arrived they carried political and social tensions with them. This was evident when Athenagoras the Great was the Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America from 1931 to 1948.[5] Athenagoras gained the support of the Greek people and soon the Greek Archdiocese took the lead as the major and most important Orthodox Church in America, a position they continue to hold, with 476,900 adherents (58% of the Eastern Orthodox and 46% of all Orthodox).[6] Under the eminent leadership of Athenagoras, the Greek Orthodox Church became the façade of Orthodoxy which made the Eastern Orthodox Church a public entity with strong ties to Capitol Hill in Washington.

The successor of Athenagoras, Archbishop Iakovos, continued the strong leadership of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese (GOA).[7] Under the leadership of Iakovos a process of unification between the different Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions began with the creation of the "Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA)" in 1960, which gathered together all the ecclesiastical heads of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, in total ten different Churches. SCOBA was dissolved in 2010 and replaced with "Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America", which is made up of all the bishops of the United States (53 members).[8] Parallel to the efforts of the Eastern Orthodox Church, in expressing the unity among themselves, the Oriental Orthodox Churches went through a similar process when they established "The Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (SCOOCH)" which was founded in 1973 by His Eminence Archbishop Torkom

[4] According to the 2010 census 78% (817,000 adherents) belong to the Eastern Orthodox Churches, those that acknowledge the Council of Chalcedon 451, and 22% (227,000 adherents) belong to the Oriental Orthodox Churches, those that do not acknowledge Chalcedon. Among the Oriental Orthodox Churches the Armenian Apostolic Church (95,000 adherents) and the Coptic Orthodox Church (92,100 adherents) make up the majority of the Oriental Orthodox Churches (together they constitute 82% of the Oriental Orthodox), while the Syrian Orthodox Church make up less than 7% of all Oriental Orthodox and less than 2% of all Orthodox. The 2010 census is available at http://www.rcms2010.org (last accessed June 2016).

[5] Cf. George Dimopoulos, *Patriarch Athenagoras I from Death to Life and from Earth to Heaven* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1973); Peter Moskos and Charles Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2014, first edition printed in 1971). Upon his enthronement as Archbishop the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese was more or less divided into two parties, one were committed Royalists and the other committed to Republican ideas (Venizelists). Athenagoras united the Greek Archdiocese through centralizing the ecclesiastical administration of the Archdiocese with the rest of the bishops transformed into auxiliary bishops.

[6] According to the 2010 Census, see above.

[7] For the history of American Orthodoxy see John W. Morris, *The Historic Church. An Orthodox View of Christian History* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2011); and John H. Erickson, *Orthodox Christians in America: A Short History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[8] For information about the Assembly of bishops see http://assemblyofbishops.org (last accessed, July 11, 2016).

Manoogian of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and His Eminence Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, then the Syriac Orthodox Archbishop of United States and Canada.[9]

It was not until the year 2000, long after the official dialogue ended, that "The Joint Commission of the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches" was established. The foremost activity has been the "Annual United Nations Prayer Service" and the Reception of the United Nations Community, with the UN Ambassadors from the Orthodox home countries attending. In 2007 the Joint Commission also published the report "Restoring the Unity in Faith. The Orthodox–Oriental Orthodox Theological Dialogue", where the commission recommends continued cooperation in line with the 1990 pastoral agreement (Geneva).[10]

In Sweden, the most populated country in Scandinavia, we find a different picture from the USA. Here the major Church is the Syriac Orthodox Church, which has 50.396 adherents (78% of the Oriental Orthodox and 40% of all Orthodox). [11] The Russian Orthodox Church had already been allowed the right to celebrate the liturgy within the Swedish Kingdom from 1617 onwards, though only for Russian people, and the first Russian Orthodox parish was established in the 17th century, which still exists but is now under the Russian Orthodox Exarchate of Paris (Ecumenical Patriarchate).[12] The first Orthodox bishop was Juri Välbe who belonged to the Estonian Orthodox Exile Church, but only as a temporary solution.[13] The first bishop consecrated for Sweden and Scandinavia was the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Polyevktos Fifinis of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, who was consecrated in 1969, and later on was followed by His Eminence Pavlos Menevisoglou in 1974.[14] Today the Greek Orthodox Metropolis counts approximately 17,000 members and has had a new Metropolitan since 2014, His Eminence Cleopas Strongylis. The Greek Orthodox

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[9] For the quest of Orthodox Unity and Cooperation in America see Thomas Fitzgerald, "Eastern Christianity in the United States," in *Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*, ed. Ken Parry (Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010), 269-279. First edition printed in 2007.

[10] Thomas FitzGerald and Emmanuel Gratsias, *Restoring the Unity in Faith. Orthodox – Oriental Orthodox Theological Dialogue. An Introduction with Texts* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007).

[11] The total number of Orthodox Christian adherents registered in 2012 by the Swedish authorities is 124,651 adherents, out of which 64,419 (52%) are Oriental Orthodox, and among the Oriental Orthodox the Syrian Orthodox Church accounts for 50.396 adherents (78% of the Oriental Orthodox and 40% of all Orthodox). This makes it evident that the Syrian Orthodox Church is the major Orthodox Church in Sweden and Scandinavia, and the two Orthodox families are equal in size. Sweden is more or less the only country in the world where we find the Syrian Orthodox Church to be the major Orthodox Church in the Diaspora. On the contrary, the Syrian Orthodox Church is usually counted among the lesser churches, as we find in America. Statistics of the Swedish faith communities is available at http://www.sst.a.se/statistik (last accessed, July 11, 2016).

[12] *Kristi förklarings kyrka i Stockholm: 1617-1967* (Transfiguration Church in Stockholm: 1617-1967) (Stockholm: Grekisk-ortodoxa Kristi förklarings kyrka, 1967).

[13] For a short description of the events leading to the consecration and episcopacy of Juri Välbe see Lucian N. Leustean, *Eastern Christianity and the Cold War, 1945-91* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 207-210.

[14] Παύλου Μενεβίσογλου, *Ἡ Ἱερὰ Μητρόπολις Σουηδίας καὶ πάσης Σκανδιναβίας 1969-1994* (Athens: 1994) (in Greek).

Church was more or less the only Eastern Orthodox Church until 1990 when the Serbian Orthodox Church created a diocese for Britain and Scandinavia with the bishop residing in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. In 2008 the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate founded a third diocese. Today there are seven parallel Eastern Orthodox Churches in Scandinavia, three of them with their own bishop residing in Sweden.

On the Oriental Orthodox side, the Syriac Orthodox Church was established as a diocese for Scandinavia and England in 1977 with Timotheos Afrem Aboodi as its first archbishop residing in Södertälje outside of Stockholm. In 1986 the diocese was divided in two with Scandinavia as a separate diocese under His Eminence Julios Abdulahad Gallo Shabo, who still remains archbishop for Sweden and Scandinavia. Today the Syriac Orthodox Church is divided into two parallel dioceses, both under the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch, each having its own bishop. In 2009, a Coptic Orthodox bishop was appointed. All the Oriental Orthodox bishops reside in Södertälje (south of Sockholm), a city where almost twenty percent belong to the Oriental Orthodox Churches.[15]

Before 1992 there were barely any contacts between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, but in 1992 there was a turning point, when the Christian Council of Sweden was created as a sequel to the Swedish Ecumenical Committee. The Council was inspired by the Middle East Council of Churches, which was organized into four Church families; a similar organization was made in Sweden, with a Lutheran Church family, an Evangelical Free Church Family, a Catholic Church Family and finally an Orthodox Church family. The Orthodox Church family was not an idea born within the Orthodox Churches, but was more or less the result of an exclusion phenomenon. The Orthodox Church family was the gateway where all those Churches that entered that were neither Evangelical nor Lutheran nor Catholic. The so-called Orthodox Church family was a mixture of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches as well as some non-canonical Churches, and with the addition of the Ancient Assyrian Church of the East.[16]

The Council continued its work without any real cooperation by the Orthodox Churches until 2000 when the Eastern Orthodox Churches jointly celebrated 1000 years of Christianity in Sweden, by commemorating Saint Anna of Novgorod (Russian), the daughter of the first Christian king, who married Jaroslav the Wise: then they discussed possible ways of cooperation.[17] In the beginning the Eastern Orthodox Churches were uneasy about being mixed in with the Oriental Orthodox. But the Serbian Orthodox bishop, Dositej, who had studied not only in Serbia but also in Bossey/Geneva (under the World Council of Churches) and in Regensburg, was familiar with the official theological

[15] Statistics from the City of Södertälje.

[16] The Greek Orthodox Metropolitan, His Eminence Pavlos, was critical toward the idea of the Council even before it was organized so it was not a surprise that the outcome made him denounce the project entirely.

[17] Notes from the discussion are in the possession of the author of this article. The Greek Orthodox Church did not participate in the event or in any other event until the arrival of the new Metropolitan in 2014.

dialogue, and argued that they should use the opportunity for fulfilling the proposed recommendations of the 1990 pastoral agreement. From this moment on the cooperation between the two Orthodox families increased in strength year by year. In 2012 the cooperation reached its peak, when the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox bishops established, with the exception of the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan, The Sankt Ignatios Foundation, with the aim of cooperation and common witness between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches.[18] Today the new Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Cleopas, installed in 2014, has joined the foundation.

The Sankt Ignatios Foundation has established a close cooperation with the Christian Council of Sweden; it works for unity between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches and has also inaugurated The Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy (in cooperation with Botkyrka College). This Academy is organized as three theological seminaries: Coptic Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox Seminary and Byzantine Orthodox. The Academy offers education for priests, leadership training, research and a One Year Introductory Course to Eastern Christian Studies.

*Dialogues and Conferences*

On American soil, apart from the Joint Commission of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, there is no other official dialogue. The Commission has issued some statements and a publication relating to the international dialogue,[19] but the impact is limited. The real effort for a dialogue has instead been connected to the Eastern–Oriental Orthodox Symposiums held at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary co-hosted with St. Nersess Armenian Theological Seminary, with publications in their journals. St. Vladimir's developed from a purely Eastern Orthodox theological seminary to an inter-Orthodox seminary. Today they also have students from all Oriental Orthodox Churches. They established a working agreement with St. Nersess as well as international relations with the Armenian Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church. Chapels have been organised on the seminary campus for Malankara and Coptic students. Oriental Orthodox students are also welcome to study at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School in Boston.[20]

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[18] The foundation was established on October 5th by Bishop Abakir of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Scandinavia, Bishop Dositej of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Sweden, Archbishop Dioskorus of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Sweden and Bishop Macarie of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Northern Europe.

[19] FitzGerald and Gratsias, *Restoring the Unity in Faith*.

[20] For a number of years the Armenians have studied in St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood (New York) until they established their own seminary of St. Nersess in La Rochelle (very close to St. Vladimir) in 1961 which has published the *Theological Journal* since 1996; and its students still share some courses in St. Vladimir which publishes the *St Vladimir's Quarterly*. The College of Holy Cross (Greek Orthodox School of Theology) has published texts of the Dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox in its *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [GOTR], 10/2; 13/2; 16/1-2. In the USA, let us also name St. Cyril Society which is a non-profit organization aimed at raising the awareness of Orthodox Christian teachings through Patristic living, research and education. For more information visit the www.stcyrilsociety.org. See also Symposium in Trinity College, Toronto (Canada) on 17 October 2015 'The Quest for Restored Communion

In Sweden and Scandinavia almost all of the attention has been focused on the practical aspects of cooperation, such as financial cooperation and education, but there are two exceptions. In 2005 the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches organized the conference "Christ He Who Is" in Sigtuna together with the Swedish Educational Association Bilda.[21] There were six main speakers: Metropolitan Mor Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, Metropolitan Anba Seraphim of Glastonbury, Bishop Ignatije Midic of Branicevo, Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev then in Vienna, Professor John H. Erickson and Michael Ellnemyr Hjälm. Upon reading the notes and the lecture by Mor Gregorios Ibrahim I am struck by the intense feeling of the present reality, when Mor Gregorios praises his colleague Metropolitan Paul Yazigi, recalling that they were both kidnapped and are still missing.

The contribution by Bishop Hilarion of Vienna (now Metropolitan of Volokalamsk) is worth mentioning as a most important contribution.[22] Bishop Hilarion gave his full attention to the conciliar nature of the Church both as an obstacle and as a solution. The schism, according to Bishop Hilarion, can only be solved if we recover the dynamic view of the councils as was the case with the early Church and the Church of the councils, or as Bishop Hilarion himself expresses it:

> The definitions of the Ecumenical Councils began with the formula "It was pleasing to the Holy Spirit and to us" (cf. Acts 15:28), pointing to the cooperation (*synergia*) between the Holy Spirit and humans in producing dogmatic definitions. In no case is it really possible to determine where the activity of the Holy Spirit ends and that of human reason begins. However, one thing is obvious: the dogmatic definitions were composed by humans and with the help of human language. Theologians made certain proposals and then participants of the Ecumenical Council agreed or disagreed with them. It is also obvious that the dogmatic formulations dealt with mysteries that could not be easily expressed in human words. The essence of the dogmas belongs to the realm of the divine while it is humans who have to search for adequate expressions of it.

In 2013 the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches in Sweden, through The Sankt Ignatios Foundation, adopted *Seven Propositional Theses*:[23]

1. The Christological Disagreement in Chalcedon was caused by misunderstanding and misrepresentation.
2. Globalization and Information Technology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has drastically changed the situation and made it possible to overcome previous misunderstandings and misrepresentations.

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Between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches 25 Years after the Agreed Statements' (with talks on http://www.trinityorthodox.ca/event/trinity-college-symposium-healing-chalcedon).

[21] All notes and lectures are available with the author of this article and/or Anastasis Media AB.

[22] Hilarion Alfeyev, "Reception of the Ecumenical Councils: A Contribution to the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches," unpublished lecture delivered at the Inter-Orthodox Conference "Christ He Who Is". Sigtuna, June 2-4, 2005.

[23] The Board of Trustees of The Sankt Ignatios Foundation adopted the Propositional Theses in 2013.

3. This in turn makes it possible to continue the discussion of Chalcedon 451 with the aim of reaching consensus concerning the Christological issue, and complete the discussion in a subsequent Ecumenical Council.
4. An Ecumenical Council cannot invent a consensus, which is not already at hand locally; therefore the initiative has to begin in the local Church.
5. The Above-mentioned theses are grounded in a common Ecclesiology, ONE multi-cultural World Church.
6. Membership or cooperation with Sankt Ignatios does not require sharing theses one to five, but the readiness to work with them in order to find the truth, with the aim of reaching sustainable Eucharistic Communion.
7. Eucharistic Communion is not the Way towards Unity but its very expression, and ultimately the Aspiration for our common search for Truth and Reconciliation.

*Conclusion*

Even though we find some positive examples of collaboration, of exchange and of sharing theological experience, like St. Vladimir's, St. Nersess, Holy Cross Seminaries and The Sankt Ignatios Theological Academy, we still have to walk an extra mile together before we are able to overcome the division from Chalcedon.

From the perspective of the unofficial as well as the official dialogue it is reasonable to consider that the Christological question is solved. This makes the unfulfilled unity more apparent and even scandalous. The opportunity of overcoming a conflict that has been going on for 1.500 years seems to be also overshadowed by internal problems within each family of Orthodox Churches. Taking responsibility for the division of Chalcedon 451, beyond theology, is not just a matter of healing a particular schism. This healing is now a matter of ecclesiology, as the two families of Churches are so close, with love as the first bond of unity. If Christ is in the midst of us, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Church herself becomes the Body of Healing, where healing is a Divine energy, urging us to become one in the midst of a tormented world. Towards Coming Together in the Eucharist and united in love.

# Beyond Words: Practical Dialogue between the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church Family

*Stanislau Paulau*

## *1. Introduction*

"Abyssinians [i.e. Ethiopians] are not heretics (...). In their worship and rites one sees the pure Orthodoxy just as in Abyssinian lakes one sees a clear sky".[1] These rather poetic words of Russian Archimandrite Porfirij Uspenskij (1865–1877) manifest an attitude which became decisive not only for the Russian–Ethiopian ecclesial contacts, but for the whole process of rapprochement between the Eastern and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. It is due to the same spirit that the official theological dialogue became possible and finally led to the famous Chambésy Statement of 1990 proclaiming, that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic Tradition".[2]

However, until now the decisions of these theological dialogues are barely implemented and, with few exceptions, have no major impact upon local communities. This situation makes it clear that in order to succeed, the very idea of the dialogue should be re-conceptualized. It should become something more than just a production of new—evidently also important—convergence agreements, that is to say something more than a theological talk with each other. This kind of dialogue should therefore not be restricted only to the doctrinal issues, but include the whole range of activities (from liturgical to pastoral, from educational to diaconical) and not be limited only to a certain group of theologically educated elites, but aim to reach the faithful of both Church families. Since this way of dialoguing goes beyond just words and also includes actual engagement at various levels, it can be referred to as practical dialogue. Although such practical cooperation was repeatedly encouraged in Recommendations by the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches,[3] it is still not spread widely enough. In this paper, focusing on cooperation between the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church family,

[1] Архимандрит Порфирий (Успенский), "Восток христианский. Абиссиния. Церковное и полити-ческое состояние Абиссинии с древнейших времен до наших дней", in: *Труды Киевской Духовной Академии* 4 (1866), 317. All translations from Russian in this article were done by the author.

[2] Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to the Churches by the Joint-Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches (September 23–28, 1990, Chambésy), §9.

[3] Cf. Recommendations on Pastoral Issues by the Joint-Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches (September 23-28, 1990, Chambésy) as well as further statements.

I would like to discuss both already established and new models of practical dialogue.

*2. Doctors, Educators and Diplomats: History of the Eastern Orthodox Cooperation with the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church*

The main place of sporadic encounters between the Ethiopian Christians and the members of the Eastern Orthodox Church family for a long time was Jerusalem, the place where not only numerous pilgrims from Ethiopia came every year, but also where Ethiopian monks and the faithful were coexisting with communities and monasteries of different Orthodox traditions. The prominent German scholar Enno Littmann (1875-1958) observed when visiting the Ethiopian monastery Deir Es-Sultan in 1900, that on the roof of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre the majority of its icons were the gifts made by the Russian faithful.[4]

A remarkable role in the process of establishing fraternal contacts with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was played by the aforementioned Archimandrite Porfirij Uspenskij, the head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem in the mid 19th century. Based upon his personal acquaintance with the Ethiopian Christians and the deep knowledge of their tradition, he asserted in his publications that the Ethiopian Church, as a matter of fact, was not Monophysite, but Orthodox, both in its faith and liturgical life.[5] Although his ideas of religious and political alliance with Ethiopia were not implemented, his writings increased Russian interest in Ethiopia during the 1880's-90's and had some practical consequences for establishing contact between the Churches of both countries.[6] This "re-discovery" of Orthodox Ethiopia in the 19th century evoked wide interest among the Russian people and resulted in the publication of some popular books full of sympathy towards Ethiopia and its ancient Church, such as *In the Country of the Black Christians* (1895) and *Our Black Coreligionists* (1900).[7] At the same time Boris Turayev (1868-1920) made an enormous contribution when he translated the Ethiopian Horologium (*Seatat*)[8] and some other liturgical texts as well as a number of hagiographies from Ge'ez into Russian.[9]

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[4] Enno Littmann, "Aus den abessinischen Klöstern in Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete: Fachzeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 16 (1902): 102–124, here at 106.

[5] Архимандрит Порфирий (Успенский), "Восток христианский. Участие России в судьбе Абиссинии," in *Труды Киевской Духовной Академии* 8 (1866): 415–440. See also articles in this volume.

[6] Cf. *Российско-эфиопские отношения в XIX-начале XX в.: Сборник документов,* ed. А. В. Хренков (Moscow: Восточная литература, 1998).

[7] Cf. Федор Волгин, *В стране черных христиан (Очерки Абиссинии)*, 1895; Владимир Бучинский, Сергей Бахланов, *Наши черные единоверцы. Их страна, государственный строй и входящие в состав государства племена* (1900).

[8] Борис Тураев, *Часослов Эфиопской Церкви* (Записки Императорской Академии наук, VIII серия; I: 7) (1887).

[9] Борис Тураев, *Исследования в области агиологических источников истории Эфиопии* (Записки историко-филологического факультета Санкт-Петербургского университета, 65:1) (1902); Борис Тураев, "Зара-Бурук, абиссинский святой XVII-XVIII вв.", in: *Памятники эфиопской письменности VIII* (1909), 1–11; Борис Тураев, "Ночное богослужение эфиопской церкви по рукописи №143 археологического музея при Киевской Духовной Академии", in: *Труды Киевской Духовной Академии* 3 (1901), 389–424.

However, in some politicized circles the idea of the conversion of the Ethiopians to the Russian Orthodox Church was also discussed. In this regard the initiative of cossack Nikolai Ashinov (1856-1902) to create a so called "Orthodox spiritual mission" in Ethiopia has to be mentioned. Largely influenced by Slavophile and nationalist moods, Ashinov made an appeal for the dispatch of Russian missionaries who should either achieve unification of the Ethiopian Church with the Russian one, or to proselytize its adherents.[10] This approach was notably criticized by the famous Professor of Church history of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Vasiliy Bolotov (1853–1900). On 16 February 1888 Bolotov delivered a brilliant speech *On the Question of a Union of the Abyssinians with the Orthodox Church* in which he argued the futility and even damage that could be caused by any attempts at Russian Orthodox propaganda among the members of the Ethiopian Church.[11] He instead advocated practical collaboration between the two Churches.

In the same year Ethiopian Emperor Yohannes IV (1837–1889) sent an official delegation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to Kiev in order to join the celebrations of the 900th anniversary of the Christianization of Rus'. The Ethiopian priests were warmly welcomed by the authorities of the Russian Church as well as by the Russian Emperor Alexander III (1845–1894) himself.[12] In the official letter dedicated to this celebration the head of the Ethiopian delegation *memher* Georgis stated: "The entire Ethiopia sends to the Russian brothers its deep reverence, since a long time it wishes to establish with them spiritual and fraternal relations".[13] Herewith a chain of mutual visits of the Church delegations were initiated and the first steps towards the rapprochement between both Churches were made.

The major practical step was taken in March 1896, after the Battle of Adwa, where the Ethiopians under the Emperor Menelik II (1844–1913) defeated the Italian colonial army: a large field ambulance of the Russian Red Cross Mission was sent to Ethiopia. It was organized from donations of the Russian Orthodox Church and funds allocated by the government to assist Ethiopians wounded in the battle. The Russian hospital which was set up in tents and immediately started operating, became the first modern European medical institution in Ethiopia. This hospital is still functioning today in Addis Ababa. Within several months of their activities in Addis Ababa and Harar, the Russian doctors rendered medical care to ca. 30.000 patients.[14] Simultaneously, the members of the Mission began education of local medical personnel and translated into Amharic a guidebook concerning aetiology, hygiene and basic

[10] Edward Thomas Wilson, Russia and Black Africa before World War II (New York-London: Holmes & Meier, 1974), 28–29.

[11] Василий Болотов, "Несколько страниц из церковной истории Эфиопии: К вопросу о соединении абиссин с Православной Церковью", *Христианское чтение* 3–4 (1888): 450–469.

[12] Андрей Хренков, "Россия–Эфиопия. Сто лет дипломатических отношений", *Азия и Африка сегодня*, 4 (1998): 53.

[13] Quoted in Николай Заболотский, "Исторические связи Русской и Эфиопской церквей", *Журнал Московской Патриархии*, 3 (1974): 56.

[14] Czeslaw Jesman, *The Russians in Ethiopia. An Essay in Futility* (London: Chatto & Windus 1958), 89.

methods of medical help and herewith laid the foundations of the development of medicine in Ethiopia.[15] Notably also Professor Vasiliy Bolotov participated in the organization of the Russian Red Cross Mission.

The Russian Red Cross Mission also encouraged the strengthening of the links between the Ethiopian and the Russian Churches, so that in 1902 the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abuna Matewos (1842–1926), paid a first visit to Russia.[16] But what was probably even more important is that due to the established friendship since the end of the 19th century some Ethiopian elites were educated in Russia. Among the first five Ethiopian youths sent by the Emperor Menelik II to Russia was also Täklä Hawaryat Täklä Maryam (1884–1977) who studied at Saint Petersburg Military Academy and was later to draft the first Ethiopian constitution in 1931.[17] After the October Revolution in 1917 the Russian ecclesiastical contacts with Ethiopia were interrupted and could be resumed only in the 1940's.

Another major Eastern Orthodox group which had contacts with the Ethiopian Church were the Greeks.[18] The Orthodox Christians Greek merchants and migrants had already been well received in Ethiopia since Byzantine times. Unlike the Russian minority, the Greeks being the largest European community in the country, established a church in Addis Ababa and the first Greek bishop for Ethiopia was already designated in 1908, which was followed by the construction of the Greek Orthodox Church (1935) in the city centre dedicated to St. Frumentius, the Illuminator of Ethiopia. Moreover, the Greeks were concerned with the question of Church unity. Demosthenes Mitzakis, the first diplomat sent by the Greek government to Ethiopia in 1879, discussed the project of the unification of the Ethiopian and the Greek Orthodox Churches, but without any tangible results.[19] In 1902 Greek Andreas Kavadias founded Ethiopia's first Amharic-language newspaper *Aimro* ('Knowledge') and the editor of the paper took the responsibility of publishing articles supporting the autocephaly of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church from the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria.[20] Within the same tradition, in 1970 was created a periodical *Abba Salama, A Review of the Association of Ethio-Hellenic Studies*, which largely contributed to inter-Orthodox dialogue.

A crucial role in pushing this dialogue forward was played by Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975), who repeatedly emphasized the importance

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[15] Richard Pankhurst, "The Beginnings of Modern Medicine in Ethiopia," *Ethiopian Observer*, 9 (1965): 114-160, here at 124-129.

[16] Lincoln De Castro, *Nella terra dei negus, pagine reccolte in Abissinia* (Treves, 1915), 287.

[17] Behru Zewde, *Pioneers of Change in Ethiopia. The Reformist Intellectuals of the Early Twentieth Century*, Eastern African Studies (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002), 57-64.

[18] Cf. Theodore Natsoulas, *The Hellenic Presence in Ethiopia: A Study of a European Minority in Africa (1730-1946)* (1977) and Anestis John Ghanotakis, *The Greeks of Ethiopia, 1889–1970* (Boston, MA: Boston University, 1979).

[19] Theodore Natsoulas, "Yohannes's Greek Advisers," Northeast African Studies 7, 3 (1985): 21-40 and Lukian Prijac, *Foreign Relations with Ethiopia. Human and Diplomatic History* (Münster: LIT Verlag 2015), 149.

[20] Meseret Chekol Reta, *The Quest for Press Freedom. One Hundred Years of History of the Media in Ethiopia* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2013), 13-15.

of Orthodox unity. Having taken it into consideration, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate decided to present him with an enkolion, a distinction which previously was granted only to the high ranking hierarchs. In January 1929 Metropolitan of Australia and New Zealand Christoforos Knitis (1872–1959) travelled to Addis Ababa and formally handed in the enkolion together with a letter of Ecumenical Patriarch Basil III (1846–1929) to Tafari Makonnen (future Emperor Haile Selassie).[21] Probably the most important achievement of the Ethiopian Emperor in this field was the convention of the Conference of the Oriental Orthodox Churches in Addis Ababa in 1965, which highlighted the importance of the practical dialogue. It not only invited the Eastern Orthodox observers, but also expressed in its main statement the "agreement that our Churches could seek a closer relationship and co-operate with the Eastern Orthodox Churches in practical affairs".[22]

The relationships between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Constantinople were so fraternal that in 1966 Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras (1886-1972) was ready to grant Emperor Haile Selassie permission to found an Ethiopian monastery on Mount Athos.[23] However, this bold idea, which was initially put forward by Ethiopian theologians who had studied at the Theological School of Halki (near Istanbul) and had spent their holidays on Mount Athos at that time, could not be realized.

Another crucial point in the practical dialogue between both Church families came about in the same year. A delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, led by the Archbishop of Minsk and Belarus Antony (1924-1986), visited Ethiopia for negotiation of further cooperation which as a result, starting from the middle-1960s, the Leningrad Theological Academy began to accept Orthodox students from Ethiopia. Some Ethiopian students stayed in Russia for postgraduate studies as well and contributed to the dialogue through their academic work. Among such studies one can single out the dissertation of Deacon Tsadik Derbe Wolde *Marriage rite of the Ethiopian Church in Relation to the Rites of the Russian Church* and the work of Deacon Merawi Tebedje *Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Perception of the Russian Orthodox Theologians and Historians* (both written in Russian), to mention just two of them. At the same time dogmatic issues were also investigated, which was especially important for the subsequent theological dialogues among the two families of Churches. Having been educated in Russia many of the Ethiopian students were then appointed bishops or became responsible for important positions within the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Some Ethiopian students were also sent not only to the Theological School of Halki but also to the universities of Athens and Thessaloniki in Greece. Moreover, some smaller scale exchanges also took place

[21] Le Courrier d'Éthiopie. Journal d'informations hebdomadaire, 11 January (1929): 3.

[22] Statement of the Conference of the Heads of Oriental Orthodox Churches (Addis Ababa, 1965), Chapter IV, B.

[23] Cf. *The Tablet*, 30th July (1966): 880. Digital version: http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/article/30th-july-1966/24/the-church-in-the-world (last accessed, June 16, 2016).

between the theological institutions of Romania, ex-Czechoslovakia and the United States.[24]

This hospitality offered to the Ethiopian students by the Eastern Orthodox Churches can be seen as the highlight of the practical dialogue between the two Churches. This collaboration was addressed also during the last visit of the late Ethiopian Patriarch Abuna Paulos (1935–2012) to Russia in 2006; speaking to the Russian Patriarch Alexy II (1929–2008) about the successful past and problematic present of the practical cooperation among the two Churches, Abuna Paulos mentioned: "History is like a living being, it is being born, gets sick and can be recovered".[25]

Apart from this, vigorous and stimulating contact on the level of the Heads of the Churches was established, with such fraternal visits to the Eastern Orthodox Churches being paid by Ethiopian Patriarchs Theophilos (1909–1979) and Paulos. In their turn a number of Eastern Orthodox delegations, including Patriarchs, have visited the Church of Ethiopia: in 1973 Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus (1913–1977) and in 1974 the Russian Patriarch Pimen (1910–1990). In 1997 Patriarch Petros of Alexandria (1949–2004) was warmly received by the Ethiopian Church. A symbolical expression of an ongoing dialogue in recent times became a common celebration of the millennium of Christianity in 2007 (according to the Ethiopian calendar) which was attended by leading representatives of many Eastern Churches, including the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I (b. 1940), who also visited Ethiopia in 1995. It can be concluded that on the whole the contacts between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church family were marked by mutual visits and fraternal cooperation, including first of all medical, educational and publishing activities.

### *3. Challenges and New Paradigms of the Practical Dialogue*

The current situation demands new paradigms for the practical dialogue. In this regard two approaches may be proposed: more inclusion of the local communities and the organization of the Church-based NGOs.

If the practical dialogue is supposed to have any importance for the life of the Churches and not be wishful thinking, it has to be done also—and first of all—at the grassroots level, at the level of the local communities and parishes. Hence it has to be considered as a part of the internal rather than the external—as it is now—affairs of the Churches. Lay people should take over more responsibility in the practical dialogue, so that the work can also be done independently from the often quite bureaucratic Church administration.

At the level of philanthropy and global cooperative involvement, we may mention the activity of an Eastern Orthodox NGO, the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). This NGO of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America was established in 1992. In Ethiopia

[24] Friedrich Heyer, *Die Kirche Äthiopiens: Eine Bestandsaufnahme* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1971), 286–287.

[25] https://mospat.ru/archive/32113.htm (last accessed, February, 22, 2015).

IOCC is active with the projects related to health-care, empowerment of the disabled, agricultural development and disaster relief. And since its initiating small-scale activities in 2003, IOCC has worked in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOC-DICAC).[26]

However, the central role in the practical dialogue is played by the laity. And here one has to stress the deep respect and cordial love which the Ethiopian faithful always express towards the Eastern Orthodox Churches and people. This brotherhood has been witnessed many times also by the author of this article during his visits to Ethiopia. However, it seems problematic that the majority of common projects between the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches are done mainly in one direction, as if the Ethiopians would have nothing to offer to the Eastern Churches. In the most obvious way it can be seen from the example of theological education: although many students from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (and Oriental Churches in general) have been studying at the theological institutions of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the mobility in the opposite direction hardly ever takes place. This situation had already been addressed during the Third Unofficial Meeting between both Church families in 1970 in Geneva, where delegates made an appeal that Eastern Orthodox theologians and students should also go to the Oriental Churches.[27] Although the joint dialogues between the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches came to the conclusion that the exchange of students and professors of theology are crucially important, the real exchange still has to be encouraged.

### *4. Instead of a Conclusion: A Personal Remark*

I would like to conclude with a personal remark regarding my own experiences. In 2012 I, an Eastern Orthodox theologian, studied one semester at the Holy Trinity Theological College of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Addis Ababa. For giving me permission to do so I am grateful to the Late Patriarch Abuna Paulos. As he himself had studied also at an Eastern Orthodox Seminary, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in the USA, he perfectly understood the necessity of a larger scale engagement of both Church families into the dialogue with each other, also at the educational level. Moreover, I could enjoy communal life with many Ethiopian Orthodox Christians while I was conducting my research there again in the winter of 2014–15.

As it is well known, thanks to the work of the Joint Commission for the Dialogue, Eastern and Oriental Churches have agreed on main disputed issues. However, there are still some misunderstandings or even prejudices towards each other in certain ecclesiastic circles. In such a way some Eastern Orthodox theologians still claim that the Oriental Orthodox Churches adhere to a Monophysite doctrine, and sometimes Oriental Orthodox theologians suppose

[26] https://www.iocc.org/where-we-work/ethiopia (last accessed Junr, 16, 2016).

[27] Summary of Conclusions of the Third Unofficial Consultation Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Theologians (Geneva, August 16–21, 1970), III, C.

that the Eastern Orthodox Churches maintain a rather Nestorian teaching. Such kind of misunderstandings can be overcome, first of all through personal encounter which may lead to discovery of a common Orthodoxy, a discovery which was also made by Archimandrite Porfirij Uspenskij around 150 years ago. And I can testify from my own experience how precious such kinds of discoveries are. During my stays in Ethiopia I have deeply appreciated the sincere interest of the Ethiopian Oriental Orthodox Christians, clergy and monks towards the Eastern Orthodox Churches, their openness and eagerness to proceed towards a full communion.

However, to continue this dialogue and to keep it alive, more information about theology, spirituality as well as general information about both Church families should be made available to the local clergy and the faithful. In this regards some promising signs can be already noticed, for example the Theological College's Library in Addis Ababa has in its possession some books written by Eastern Orthodox theologians such as Kallistos Ware (b. 1934), John Meyendorff (1926–1992) and Alexander Schmemann (1921–1983), and these are widely quoted by students in their research papers.

The above-mentioned examples and trajectories of the cooperation between the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwaḥədo Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church family reveal that however important the intellectual level of the dialogue may be, it cannot exist on its own. The theological dialogues can achieve their goals only if they are filled with life, for which reason a wider understanding of the dialogue as well as a new culture of the dialogue have to be established. Moreover, and most importantly, it has to be recognized that the sharing of the Church life—in all its dimensions—itself constitutes the core of the dialogue, of the dialogue which goes beyond words.

# Seeking United Orthodox Christian Witness through Mass Media and Other Types of Exchanges

*George Alexander*

Since January 2008, I have served as the Secretary and Spokesperson of the Orthodox Cognate PAGE Society (OCP), a Society for Orthodox Christian Unity and Faith.[1] Established in 2007, in Kerala (India), the Society mainly aims at promoting pan-Orthodox unity and ultimately at the conciliar unification of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches.[2] The promoters also intend to educate and spread Orthodoxy, nurture Orthodox faith and values among the faithful through visits and holding meetings, interviews and discussions with various Orthodox Church delegations. The Society strongly promotes its motto: Seeking United Orthodox Christian Witness. Orthodoxy Cognate PAGE Society is an initiative to bring the world closer to the true values of Orthodoxy through dialogue, action and especially through the OCP Media Network which is updated regularly with news, articles, and events from the world of Orthodoxy. By broadcasting news which are common to the two families of Churches through our website, we believe that this allows the creation of a common platform for Orthodox Churches thereby enhancing the phase of global Christian Orthodox unity. Also, we believe that pan-Orthodox communication should be aimed at getting to know each other better.[3] Our challenge is not just the media alone, but is to exchange views and educate each other about the culture, spirituality, worship and pilgrimage of both families, as well as about the historical and important places of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox. We, the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox, face several common challenges which can be answered in creating an alternative united Orthodox Media platform to share our news, in order to communicate our common concerns. We have to properly communicate Orthodox news as well as the truth of Orthodoxy to the world. There must also be a concerted and continuous effort from all of us to create a common witness and to bring both families of Churches into the same global platform of communication. For example, we advertised the Armenian Liturgy held at the Akhtamar Church Island (eastern Turkey) on 7th September 2014, with the presence of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Christians. Ecumenical

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orthodoxy_Cognate_PAGE_Society. For details on its History, Activities and Achievements, Objectives, Ecumenical Policy see the website www.theorthodoxchurch.info /society/ (last accessed June 20, 2016). For contacts: theorthodoxchurch.info@gmail.com or info@theorthodoxchurch.info

[2] OCP provides equal importance to Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches and believes that both the Byzantine (Eastern) Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches are the true heirs to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, which is the Church of the Apostles and the Holy Fathers, including a common christological faith.

[3] In fact, at the level of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, even though we know the existence of each other, but at the same time we remain alienated.

Patriarch Bartholomew participated together with Armenian and Syriac Orthodox Prelates (Archbishop Aram Ateshian, Co-Patriarch of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople and Mor Filiksinos Yusuf Çetin, Patriarchal Vicar of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Istanbul and Ankara). Large numbers of faithful from different parts of Turkey and abroad participated in the worship. Thus, the liturgical service turned out to be a great example of Orthodox brotherhood.[4] Some Orthodox news items are not advertised in the media as they are considered of little or no interest by media personnel and the general public. Such facts may also remain unknown to many faithful of both families of Orthodox Churches. For example, when the Russian Patriarch Kirill (then Metropolitan Kirill) visited India in 2006 and was honoured with the Order of St. Gregory of Parumala by the Indian Orthodox Malankara Church; or the visit of the Coptic Orthodox delegation to the Monastic Community of Mount Athos on 25 May 2014[5]; or the illegal detention since 2007 by the government of Eritrea of the Canonical Patriarch of Eritrea Abune Antonios, enthroned in 2004.

As several printed material and visual media are often biased when speaking of the atrocities endured by some Orthodox Christian communities, we also have the responsibility to correct false information. We also have to convey our common concerns to both Orthodox families in a language understood by all, including the non-Orthodox world, which could help them understand the very existence of the Orthodox Churches.[6] Also, in what language should we produce united Orthodox materials? English of course which is widely used around the world, and also other languages, including regional languages. But this requires lots of hard work, money and investment.

How to build such a united voice for the communication/media of Orthodox Christianity? We need to reassess the volume of news given by each Church about events in other sister Orthodox Churches. We need to take into account that we live in a world where Christianity is often criticised and even (at times) discriminated against and persecuted. For this, we need to develop a special concern, in each of our families of Orthodox Churches, with the aim also to help those discriminated against or persecuted.[7] Having an alternative Orthodox Christian media, expressed in a united voice, will also help to defend our common and human rights.

We must accept the fact that social media like Facebook, Twitter and others can play a vital role in creating unity among Orthodox Christians. These social media so far have played a key role in bringing Orthodox Christians of

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[4] http://www.armenianchurchwd.com/news/historic-armenian-liturgy-held-at-the-akhtamar-church-unites-eastern-and-oriental-orthodox-christians-ecumenical-patriarch-bartholomew-participates-for-the-first-time-together-with-syriac-and-armenian-orthodox-bishops/

[5] http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/high-level-coptic-orthodox-delegation-pays-historic-visit-to-the-monastic-republic-of-mount-athos/

[6] Most of the secular media use wrong terminologies or words usually used by the Orthodox. Thus we should also prepare a kind of dictionary/lectionary on Orthodox Christianity comprising Eastern and Oriental Orthodox terminologies.

[7] For example discrimination and persecution of the Christians especially in Egypt, Syria and in Irak; or the kidnapping of the two Greek Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Metropolitans of Aleppo in Syria in April 2013.

various Churches together in a common platform for discussion. It has already acted as a place for the exchange of pan-Orthodox ideas and even creating friendship between Orthodox Christians.

Another major area of our focus towards unity should be the exchange of inter-Orthodox visits. This was emphasised several times in the texts of recommendations of the Official Theological Dialogue.[8] In October 2013, on behalf of the OCP Society, I had a meeting in Addis Ababa with the Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as well as with the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Petros of Axum and All Ethiopia to discuss various aspects of Orthodox unity.

Another concern for us is about Orthodox Churches in the diaspora. When there are several Orthodox Churches located in the same area, often there is not enough interaction between them. In the month of October 2012, a pan-Orthodox event was hosted by the Indian Orthodox Cathedral in Abu Dhabi where all Orthodox Churches in the UAE were invited. It was a great event, even though some of the priests and parishioners did not show up. We still remain under exposed to our Orthodox brethren, and we lose a great opportunity to know each other. We should at least come together once in a year, maybe at a proposed time.

In the ecumenical effort, Orthodox must focus on building dialogue for their own unity among Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox. This effort should be made despite some existing differences, through a conciliar approach and also practical dialogue. We also have to give recognition to people working for our Orthodox unity.[9] All Orthodox should also face in common the questions of proselytism from some Christian groups. Concerning inter-religious dialogue, we also have to understand certain issues of the Orthodox Christians living in the Arab/Muslim world, for example in the United Arab Emirates where I work.

In short, we must build a common platform to care for all kinds of exchanges: for example to share diversified theological, liturgical and spiritual resources, to nurture theological exchanges as well as many other types of exchanges. We need to reorient ourselves toward a communal sense of Orthodox identity and belonging. We need to strive forward in order to cross borders, break the ice and create a united awareness for global Orthodox Christian needs and concerns.

For our common reflection we should consider the following points: to develop Orthodox Christian journalism as a branch of action and study, to present a united Orthodox Christian presence and witness in Orthodox and secular media, to respond to common challenges faced by Orthodoxy, to increase visits and exchanges between both families of Churches with united media coverage, to organize intensive educational programmes between Eastern and

[8] See *Towards Unity* (ed. C. Chaillot).

[9] The Sopana Orthodox Academy,of the Malankara Orthodox in Kottayam (India) gave awards for their work for unity between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox to several people, including to Christine Chaillot http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/only-dialogue-can-foster-relations-between-eastern-and-oriental-orthodox-churches-dr-christine-challiot/ (last accessed July 11, 2016).

Oriental Orthodox[10] and to organize inter-Orthodox pilgrimages and cultural activities as well as extensive pan-Orthodox cooperation.

Orthodox Mass media is a means to communicate and convince people to raise their voices and to take action. This remains our biggest challenge. A united Orthodox Mass media can work wonders by bringing the richness of faith and tradition of both families to each other as well as to the outer world. Mass media can enlarge the horizon of knowing better our own brethren. It gives a new world of opportunities to act, think and reflect. It has an enormous role in building bonds between both families of Orthodox Churches, and, equally importantly, it can create togetherness and help bridge some of the existing gaps.

I spoke of all these questions during the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodox (I.A.O.) Mass Media Conference in Thessaloniki, in Greece, in May 2014. I strongly believe that Orthodox Christian communication and mass media should have the language of incarnation, the language of truth. It is important to work together to build an international news agency or resources centre by creating huge networks of Orthodox newspapers, journals, magazines and e-media. The challenge for us is to convert virtual unity into reality. In order to create a united platform for Orthodox Churches or even create a united Mass media, we need the absence of personal politics and power struggles. Only genuine intentions and unconditional love, understanding and respect for each other can result in constructive dialogues. We do not need Ego. What we need is humility, cooperation, hard work and respect. The Orthodox Mass media can unite Orthodox resources through several useful projects for the common benefit of the faithful and others as well. This question was part of the discussion at the Thessaloniki Conference in 2013, gathering Orthodox media from several countries.

If we get to know each other through dialogue, at the same time we shall grow on all levels, both theological and spiritual. The conciliar unity of both families of Churches (Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox) will benefit the whole of Christianity, and even the outside world. In 1959 the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras received Father Paul Varghese (late Metropolitan Gregorious Paulose) of the Indian Orthodox Malankara Church. The Patriarch said that by the close of that year unity between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches should be achieved, and no time should be wasted. Now, in 2016, in the 57th year after this meeting, where are we standing? What is the very essence and nature of our relations? What have we done so far to heal the 1500 years old schism that divided the eastern Christendom? Have we taken any action or responsibility in making pan-orthodoxy as our mission? Are we really focusing on what divides us or what unites us? Diversity of our cultures is richness for all. This diversity experienced in united Orthodoxy would be the strength of global Orthodoxy. Let us make bridges of unity and not torpedoes of separation. Let us work together. Pan-Orthodox Unity is a great calling for us. This is what Christ wants from us, unconditional love and forgiveness for each other!

[10] The Orthodox mass media have a great task to take the glory of the past to the present generation and educate them about it.

# The Association "Dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox" in Paris

*Christine Chaillot*

The Association "Dialogue between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox" was founded by me in Paris, in November 2000. Its President is Father Boris Bobrinskoy, then the dean of The Institute of Orthodox Theology of St. Sergius (1993-2005) and also my spiritual father, who always encouraged me in my work for this dialogue between the two families of Churches.[1] Why and how did I decide to found this Association? In the texts of the Official Theological Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox, some were dedicated to "Practical Dialogue". These 'Recommendations' pushed the two Families of Churches to be active in the Dialogue in different ways. For example, in the Recommendations on Pastoral Issues of the Joint Commission (held in Chambésy, Geneva, on 23-28 September 1990), one can read: "(I) About the relations among our two families of Churches: (...) [1. There is a need for] (...) a period of intense preparation of our people to participate in the implementation of our recommendations and in the restoration of our Churches (...) 2. It is important to plan an exchange of visits by our heads of Churches and prelates, priests and lay people of each one of our two families of Churches to the other (...) 4. In localities where Churches of the two families co-exist, the congregations should organize participation of one group of people—men, women, the young and children, including priests—where possible from one congregation of one family to a congregation of the other, to attend in the latter's Eucharistic worship on Sundays and feast days (...)". After reading these texts, I began to think about how to implement these recommendations in my surroundings, for practical dialogue, by organizing contacts/meetings between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox at my local level in cosmopolitan Paris which I often visit, as well as elsewhere. And thus I decided to found the association, the main objective of this association being to facilitate a better knowledge and understanding of the life, spirituality and traditions of the Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox. It should promote favourable exchanges between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Christians by organizing lectures, concerts,[2] pilgrimages and by publishing informative articles and books.

Here are some examples of the activities of the Association. The Association has an annual meeting in Paris, most of the time taking place in The

[1] Metropolitan Damaskinos Papandreou, the Co-President of the Official Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches from 1985 to 2003, then my bishop in Geneva (my hometown, also encouraged me in doing so, for example by writing prefaces for some of my books).

[2] For example, such concerts were organised in Paris at the church of St. Seraphim of Sarov, at the Greek cathedral, at UNESCO and also outside France.

Saint Sergius Theological Institute, but also in Oriental Orthodox parishes.[3] Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox women, men and priests then gather in order to study the similarities between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox. A given theme is chosen each year, such as: history, spirituality, the Sunday Liturgy, monastic life, the Church Fathers' writings, the saints, the veneration of icons; and there are also discussions about the life of their communities in their native homelands as well as in France and Europe.[4] Such lectures are given by Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox, followed by questions and post-lecture meetings. Similar lectures, sometimes followed by concerts of liturgical music, gathering Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox have also been organized in other European cities: Brussels, Geneva, London, Dublin, Barcelona, Bialystok (Poland), Oslo, Helsinki, Moscow, Saint Petersburg as well as in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Ethiopia.[5]

A website of the Association is operational (orthodialogue.bl.ee). It aims at giving information on the Theological Dialogue to people having an interest in this dialogue (especially at the practical level) all around the world. On the website are found: annual reports of the Association, including news of the Christians in the Middle East; texts of the Official Theological Dialogue, including the Recommendations on Pastoral Issues, with answers by some Churches; articles and texts about the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Dialogue; the Orthodox Brotherhood's ("Fraternité Orthodoxe") Workshops; letters of blessing by Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox prelates and personalities who support the activities of both the Dialogue and the Association; some addresses and websites.

The Association has also organized some pilgrimages: in Egypt, to visit Coptic monasteries, churches and the patriarchate as well as to meet people and clergy. Another similar pilgrimage was made to Ethiopia.

At the liturgical level, friends of the Association have attended the Liturgies and Prayers in Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox parishes, as well as the consecrations of new churches, for example in the new church of the Syrian Orthodox community in Montfermeil (near Paris) and in the Coptic and Ethiopian parishes in and near Paris. Friends of the Association attended the celebration of certain saints and veneration of their relics. For example of Saint Gregory (d. 917) of Armenian origin, who lived as a hermit in Saint-Martin-le-Solitaire, in Bondaroy, near Petiviers (south of Paris) where there is a small Eastern Orthodox monastery; of Saint Maurice and the martyrs of the Theban Legion (3rd century) originally from south Egypt, in Saint Maurice (Switzerland).

In 2001, from 27th to 29th July, a special meeting took place in Warburg, near Kassel (Germany) between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox: the aim was to know each other better, as well as to discuss questions of common interest and possibilities of common action. There were more than thirty participants, priests,

[3] In France the Assembly of the (Eastern) Orthodox bishops of France (1997) was created and afterwards so was a parallel Assembly for the Oriental Orthodox but they have only episodic contacts. Such contacts should be organized and encouraged all around the world.

[4] See details on the website http://orthodialogue.bl.ee/

[5] For more details, see the website of the association http://orthodialogue.bl.ee/

deacons and youth coming from eleven European countries, with the presence and blessing of three bishops: Bishop Seraphim of the Romanian Church in Germany and Central Europe; Archbishop Cicek (d. 2005) of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Switzerland; and Bishop Damian of the Coptic Church in Germany who had extended the invitation to us.[6]

In 2001 the Association had been accepted as a member of the Orthodox Brotherhood in Western Europe ("Fraternité Orthodoxe en Europe occidentale"). During the Conference organized every three years by the "Fraternité", which gathers hundreds of Eastern Orthodox and some Oriental Orthodox from all over Europe, there is a workshop to present the different Oriental Orthodox Churches.

Another way of working to promote dialogue and providing deeper knowledge of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox is to publish books, thus allowing the sharing of information. In fact, one point (5c) of the Recommendations on Pastoral Issues of the Joint Commission (Chambésy, Geneva, September 1990) says that: "We need a book which gives some brief account, both historical and descriptive, of all the Churches of our two families. This should also be produced in the various languages of our peoples, with pictures and photographs as much as possible".[7] This explains why I followed these recommendations *à la lettre* and how I decided to write about the life and spirituality of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and their faithful. Some books, first published in English (the language used by the majority of people), were published in a collection which I called *Inter-Orthodox Dialogue*, that is by shortening the name of "Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Christians". These books were meant to be for the dialogue, and more specifically for a practical dialogue and a wider public. Since the 1990s, I have travelled around the Middle East, to Africa, India and Europe where I visited and interviewed prelates, clergy, the faithful, the young as well as monks and nuns of both the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox. I have seen many of the common features shared by the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox concerning their life and spirituality; at the same time, in my writings, I wanted to point out what was unique in each of the Oriental Orthodox traditions. My books on the life and spirituality of the Oriental Orthodox Churches include: *The Malankara Orthodox Church*, Geneva, (1996); *The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch*, Geneva, (1998); *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Tradition*, Paris, (2002); *The Coptic Orthodox Church*, Paris, (2005).[8] The life and spirituality of these Churches are described in chapters on

[6] Cf. *Service Orthodoxe de Presse*, no 261, Paris (2003).

[7] In 1970, the Third Unofficial Consultation in Geneva, had already proposed to publish a handbook containing statistical, historical and other information regarding the various autocephalous Churches, including spirituality (*Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and Oriental Orthodox Churches* ed. C. Chaillot (Geneva, 1998) 53 (functions c and f).

[8] The texts of these books were gathered in one book in French *Vie et spiritualité des Églises orthodoxes orientales des traditions syriaque, arménienne, copte et éthiopienne*, Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 2011; and in Arabic by An Nour in Beirut in 2012 (2 vols.); in Russian in Kiev by Duh i litera in 2013 (see

History; Organization of the Church; Mission and Diaspora; Sunday Schools and Youth Movement as well as Languages, Literature and Studies; Liturgical Life; Spirituality and Monastic Life.[9] In the English versions of these books, for contacts, some addresses, emails and websites are listed; and many small pictures (which I have personally taken) present the main places and monasteries. Some bishops/clergy, the faithful, monks and nuns who are mentioned or interviewed in the books have also been photographed.

In order to promote dialogue at the level of the theological dialogue, in 1998 I had already published a book entitled *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches*.[10] It collects all the texts of the Unofficial and Official Dialogues, as well as other texts. These can be used as another tool and a means of promotion for this dialogue. As for my first book, *Rôle des Images et Vénération des Icônes dans les Eglises Orthodoxes Orientales*, published in 1993, it was concerned with the specific topic of icons and their common veneration by the Oriental Orthodox Churches and their connection with the Christology of the Oriental Orthodox Churches.[11] Translations of my books were made in different languages.[12] In the same collection, Inter-Orthodox Dialogue, and always for the sake of the dialogue, I also began to publish in 2005, in a book, a series of articles on the *History of the Orthodox Churches in the 20th Century in Western Europe*, with all jurisdictions.[13] A *History of the Orthodox Churches in the 20th Century in Eastern Europe* was also edited under my name.[14] In the future, I hope to continue this History for other continents, with the help of other authors.[15] It is hoped that such books can also help the Oriental Orthodox (and other people) to better know the Eastern Orthodox, and *vice versa*. I also write articles which can be used in the context of the dialogue. In addition I give lectures on the Oriental Orthodox Churches and on the dialogue in different countries,[16] including in Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox theological academies and universities. This allows discussions with all kinds of people, including theological students,

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http://duh-i-litera.com); two books were published in Amharic in Addis Ababa: *The Ethiopian Church* (2006) and *The Coptic Church* (2012).

[9] For pedagogical facility, in each tradition, I included the alphabet and the 'Our Father' prayer in phonetics of the local Church language, as well as long bibliographies and maps.

[10] The Russian translation published in 2001 by St. Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute in Moscow is available on http://www.standrews.ru.

[11] See my other article in this volume.

[12] In 2015 in English, French, Romanian, Bulgarian, Italian, Russian, Arabic, Amharic, and, hopefully, in other languages in the future, in order to share the dialogue with as many people as possible in different countries.

[13] With a French edition in 2005 and an English one in 2006, Bulgarian (2014) and expected versions in Romanian, and Russian.

[14] Published in French in 2009 by Les Editions du Cerf (Paris) and in English in 2011 by Peter Lang (Oxford).

[15] For Africa, for example, I published one article, "L'Eglise orthodoxe en Tunisie," *Le Messager orthodoxe*, no 152 (2012).

[16] In Western Europe and also in Russia (Moscow and St Petersburg), Ukraine, Belarus, Romania, Bulgaria as well as in Egypt, Ethiopia and India.

that is, with the future clergy. I also give interviews on the radio and TV and for the newspapers in some of the aforementioned countries and others.

In conclusion, I shall say that both families of Churches are especially present in the Middle East and also are, nowadays, more and more numerous in Europe and on other continents. They must all be informed. What is most important for this Dialogue is to give correct information by always referring to the texts of the Official Theological Dialogue; to remain open to each other and to avoid misconception. Since the 1990s I have devoted most of my time and energy to the practical dialogue between Oriental Orthodox and the Eastern Orthodox Churches and people. In the future, I hope that other associations will do similar work and organize events similar to those described above, in different countries and continents.

In 1998, as Metropolitan Damaskinos was the Co-President of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue, I asked him for an introduction for my book *Towards Unity*, in which he wrote as a conclusion: "As Co-President of the Joint Commission of the Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, I am delighted at the commitment of those seeking to make this dialogue accessible to all Orthodox, other Christians, and to all those interested in the dialogue. I sincerely hope that the texts presented here will help gain new or better mutual knowledge and understanding. Indeed, I wish that each reader, in his or her own way, will be able to contribute to the realization of the Unity of Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches so that we may live and witness together the same faith". I too, wish the same.

# Part IV:
# Appendices: Statements and Texts

# A. Official Statements of the Theological Dialogue

## Communiqué of the Joint Commission
## Chambésy, Switzerland, 10-15 December 1985

After two decades of unofficial theological consultations and meetings (1964-1985), moved forward by the reconciling grace of the Holy Spirit, we, the representatives of the two families of the Orthodox Tradition, were delegated by our Churches in their faithfulness to the Holy Trinity, and out of their concern for the unity of the Body of Jesus Christ to take up our theological dialogue at an official level.

We thank God, the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, for granting us the fraternal spirit of love and understanding which dominated our meeting throughout. The first part of our discussions centred on the appellation of the two families in our dialogue. Some discussion was also devoted to the four unofficial Consultations of Aarhus (1964), Bristol (1967), Geneva (1970), and Addis Ababa (1971). It was thought that the studies and "agreed statements" of these unofficial consultations as well as the studies of our theologians could provide useful material for our official dialogue.

A concrete form of methodology to be followed in our dialogue was adopted by the Joint Commission. A Joint Subcommittee of six theologians was set up, three from each side, with the mandate to prepare common texts for our future work. For the next meetings, whose aim would be to re-discover our common grounds in Christology and Ecclesiology, the following main theme and subsequent sub-themes were agreed upon: "Towards a Common Christology" a) Problems of terminology b) Conciliar formulations c) Historical factors d) Interpretation of Christological dogmas today.

Special thanks were expressed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate for convening this official dialogue, as well as for the services and facilities which were offered for our first meeting here in Chambésy, Geneva, at the Orthodox Centre. We hope that the faithful of our Churches will pray with us for the continuation and success of our work.

+ Prof. Dr. Chrysostomos (Konstandinidis)
Metropolitan of Myra Ecumenical Patriarchate Co-President of the Commission
+ Bishop Bishoy
Coptic Orthodox Church Co-President of the Commission

## Communiqué of the Joint Commission
## St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 20-24 June 1989

The second meeting of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches took place at the St. Bishoy Monastery in Wadi-El-Natroun, Egypt, from 20-24 June, 1989. The official representatives of the two families of Churches of the Orthodox Churches met in an atmosphere of warm cordiality and Christian brotherhood for four days at the guest house of the Patriarchal residence at the Monastery, and experienced the gracious hospitality and kindness of the Coptic Orthodox Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and his Church. His Holiness Pope and Patriarch Shenouda addressed the opening session of the meeting and appealed to the participants to find a way to restore communion between the two families of Churches. The participants also travelled to Cairo to listen to the weekly address of Pope Shenouda to thousands of the faithful in the Great Cathedral of Cairo. Pope Shenouda also received the participants at his residence later. The twenty three participants came from 13 different countries and represented 13 churches. The main item for consideration was the report of the Joint Subcommittee of six theologians on the problems of terminology and interpretation of Christological dogmas today. The meetings were co-chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan of Damaskinos of Switzerland and His Grace Bishop Bishoy of Damiette. In his response to Pope Shenouda Metropolitan Damaskinos appealed to the participants to overcome difficulties caused by differences of formulation. Words should serve and express the essence, which is our common search for restoration of full communion. "This division is an anomaly, a bleeding wound in the Body of Christ, a wound which according to His will that we humbly serve, must be healed". A small drafting group composed of Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios of New Delhi, Professor Vlassios Phidas, Prof. Fr. John Romanides, Prof. Dimitroff, and Mr. Joseph Moris Faltas produced a brief statement of faith based on the report of the Joint Subcommittee, in which the common Christological convictions of the two sides were expressed. This statement after certain modifications was adopted by the Joint Commission for transmission to our Churches, for their approval and as an expression for our common faith, on the way to restoration of full communion between the two families of Churches. The statement follows.

## Agreed Statement of the Joint Commission
## St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 20-24 June 1989

We have inherited from our Fathers in Christ the one apostolic Faith and Tradition, though as Churches we have been separated from each other for centuries. As two families of Orthodox Churches long out of communion with each other we now pray and trust in God to restore that communion on the basis of the Apostolic faith of the undivided Church of the first centuries which we confess in our common Creed. What follows is a simple reverent statement of what we do believe, on our way to restore communion between our families of Orthodox Churches. Throughout our discussions we have found our common ground in the formula of our common Father, St. Cyril of Alexandria: *mia physis (hypostasis) tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*, and in his dictum that "it is sufficient for the confession of our true and irreproachable Faith to say and to confess that the Holy Virgin is *Theotokos* (Hom: 15, cf. Ep. 39)". Great indeed is the wonderful mystery of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one True God, one *ousia* in three *hypostases* or three *prosopa*. Blessed be the Name of the Lord our God, for ever and ever. Great indeed is also the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for us and for all salvation.

The Logos, eternally consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Spirit in His Divinity, has in these last days, become incarnate of the Holy Spirit and Blessed Virgin Mary *Theotokos*, and thus become man, consubstantial with us in His humanity but without sin. He is true God and true Man at the same time, perfect in his Divinity, perfect in His humanity. Because the one she bore in her womb was at the same time fully God as well as fully human we call the Blessed Virgin *Theotokos*. When we speak of the one composite (*synthetos*) hypostasis of our Lord Jesus Christ, we do not say that in Him a divine hypostasis and a human hypostasis came together. It is that the one eternal hypostasis of the Second Person of the Trinity has assumed our created human nature in the act uniting it with his own uncreated divine nature, to form an inseparably and unconfusedly united real divine-human being, the natures being distinguished from each other in contemplation (*theoria*) only. The *hypostasis* of the Logos before the Incarnation, even with His divine nature, is of course not composite. The same *hypostasis*, as distinct from nature, of the Incarnate Logos, is not composite either. The unique theandric person (*prosopon*) of Jesus Christ is one eternal *hypostasis* who has assumed human nature by the Incarnation. So we call that *hypostasis* composite, on account of the natures which are united to form one composite unity. It is not the case that our Fathers used *physis* and *hypostasis* always interchangeably and confused the one with the other. The term *hypostasis* can be used to denote both the person as distinct from nature and also the person with the nature, for a *hypostasis* never in fact exists without a nature. It is the same *hypostasis* of the Second Person of the Trinity, eternally begotten from the Father who in these last days became a human being and was born of the Blessed Virgin. This is the mystery of the hypostatic union we confess in humble adoration - the real union of the divine with the human, with all the properties and functions of the uncreated divine nature, including natural will and natural energy, inseparably and unconfusedly united with the created human nature with all its properties and functions, including natural will and natural energy. It is the Logos Incarnate who is the subject of all the willing and acting of Jesus Christ. We agree in condemning the Nestorian and the Eutychian heresies. We neither separate nor divide the human nature in Christ from His divine nature, nor do we think that the former was absorbed in the latter and thus ceased to exist. The four adverbs used to qualify the mystery of the hypostatic union belong to our common tradition - without commingling (or confusion) (*asyngchytos*), without change (*atreptos*), without separation (*achoristos*) and without division (*adiairetos*). Those among us who speak of two natures in Christ, do not thereby deny their inseparable, indivisible union; those among us who

speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ, do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human, without change, without confusion. Our mutual agreement is not limited to Christology, but encompasses the whole faith of the one undivided Church of the early centuries. We are agreed also in our understanding of the Person and Work of God the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father alone and is always adored with the Father and the Son. The Joint Commission also appointed a Joint Subcommittee for Pastoral Problems between churches of the two families, composed of the following ten persons:

-Metropolitan Damaskinos. Co-President, Ex officio
-Bishop Bishoy. Co-President, Ex officio
-Prof. Vlassios Phidas. Co-Secretary, Ex officio
-Bishop Mesrob Krikorian. Co-Secretary, Ex officio
-Metropolitan George Khodr of Mt Liban
-Metropolitan Petros of Axum
-Prof. Gosevic (Serbia)
-Prof. Dr. K. M. George (India)
-A Nominee of Patriarch Ignatius Zakka Iwas of Syria
-Metropolitan Gregorios of Shoa

This Joint Subcommittee will have its first meeting from 5-9 December in Anba Bishoy Monastery and will prepare a report for the next meeting of the Joint Commission.

It was also decided that the next meeting of the Joint Commission would be held in September 1990 at Chambésy, Geneva, to consider:

a) The report of the Joint Subcommittee on Pastoral Problems.

b) Conciliar formulations and anathemas (Rev. Prof. John S. Romanides, H. E. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios).

c) Historical factors (Prof. Vlassios Phidas, Rev. Father Tadros Y. Malaty).

d) Interpretation of Christological dogmas today (Metropolitan Georges Khodr of Mount Liban, Bishop Mesrob Krikorian, and Mr Joseph Faltas).

e) Future steps.

It was also decided that the name of the Joint Commission would be Joint Commission of the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

## Introduction of the Joint Commission
## Chambésy, Switzerland, 23-28 September 1990

The third meeting of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches took place at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Chambésy, Geneva, from 23-28 September 1990. The official representatives of the two families of the Orthodox Churches and their advisers met in an atmosphere of prayerful waiting on the Holy Spirit and warm, cordial, Christian brotherly affection. We experienced the gracious and generous hospitality of His Holiness Patriarch Dimitrios I, through His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, in the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. We were also received at two grand receptions, one at the residence of Metropolitan Damaskinos and the other at the residence of His Excellency, Mr. Kerkinos, the Ambassador of Greece to the United Nations, and Mrs. Kerkinos. The 34 participants came from Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, India, Lebanon, Poland, Switzerland, Syria, U.K., U.S.A., U.S.S.R. (Russian Church, Georgian Church and Armenian Church), and Yugoslavia. The six days of meetings were co-chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland and His Eminence Metropolitan Bishoi of Damiette. His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos in his inaugural address exhorted the participants to "work in a spirit of humility, brotherly love and mutual recognition" so that "the Lord of the Faith and Head of His Church" will guide us by the Holy Spirit on the speedier way towards unity and communion.

The meeting received two reports, one from its Theological Subcommittee, which met at the Orthodox Centre, Chambésy (20-22 September, 1990), and the other from its Subcommittee on Pastoral Relations, which met at the Anba Bishoy Monastery, Egypt (31 Jan. - 4 Feb. 1990). The following papers which had been presented to the Theological Subcommittee were distributed to the participants:

(1) Dogmatic Formulations and Anathemas by Local and Ecumenical Synods within their Social Context, by Revd. Prof. John S. Romanides, Church of Greece. (2) Anathemas and Conciliar Decisions: Two issues to be settled for Restoration of Communion among Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Orthodox Churches, by Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios, Metropolitan of Delhi, Orthodox Syrian Church (3) Historical Factors and the Council of Chalcedon, by Fr. T. Malaty, Coptic Orthodox Church (4) Historical Factors and the Terminology of the Synod of Chalcedon (451), by Prof. Dr. Vlassios Pheidas, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria (5) Interpretation of Christological Dogmas Today, by Metropolitan George Khodr, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch (6) Interpretation of Christological Dogmas Today, by Bishop Mesrob Krikorian, Armenian Apostolic Church of Etchmiadzin.

The six papers and the two Subcommittee reports, along with the "Summary of Conclusions" of the Fourth Unofficial Conversations at Addis Ababa (1971) which were appended to the report of the Theological Subcommittee, formed the basis of our intensive and friendly discussion on the issues and actions to be taken. A drafting committee composed of Metropolitan George Khodr, Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios, Archbishop Keshishian, Archbishop Garima, Revd. Prof. John Romanides, Metropolitan Matta Mar Eustathius (Syria), Prof. Ivan Dimitrov (Bulgaria), with Prof. V Phidas and Bishop Krikorian as co-secretaries, produced the draft for the Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches. Another drafting Committee composed of Prof. Papavassiliou (Cyprus), Bishop Christoforos (Czechoslovakia), Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios and Liqa Seltanat Habta Mariam Warqineh (Ethiopia), with Fr. Dr. George Dragas as secretary, produced the draft for the Recommendations on Pastoral Issues. The following is the text of the unanimously approved Second Statement and Recommendations.

## Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches
## Chambésy, Switzerland, 23-28 September 1990

The first Agreed Statement on Christology (Annex 1) adopted by the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches, at our historic meeting at the Anba Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, from 20 to 24 June 1989, forms the basis of this Second Agreed Statement on the following affirmations of our common faith and understanding, and recommendations on steps to be taken for the communion of our two families of Churches in Jesus Christ our Lord, who prayed "that they all may be one".

1. Both families agree in condemning the Eutychian heresy. Both families confess that the Logos, the Second Person of the Holy Spirit, only begotten of the Father before the ages and consubstantial with Him, was incarnate and was born from the Virgin Mary Theotokos; fully consubstantial with us, perfect Man with soul, body and mind (*nous*); He was crucified, died, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, ascended to the Heavenly Father, where He sits on the right hand of the Father as Lord of all Creation. At Pentecost, by the coming of the Holy Spirit, He manifested the Church as His Body. We look forward to His coming again in the fullness of His glory, according to the Scriptures.

2. Both families condemn the Nestorian heresy and the crypto-Nestorianism of Theodoret of Cyrrhus. They agree that it is not sufficient merely to say that Christ is consubstantial both with His Father and with us, by nature God and by nature Man; it is necessary to affirm also that the Logos, Who is by nature God, became by nature Man, by His Incarnation in the fullness of time.

3. Both families agree that the hypostasis of the Logos became composite (*synthetos*) by uniting to His divine uncreated nature with its natural will and energy, which He has in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit, created human nature, which He assumed at the Incarnation and made His own, with its natural will and energy.

4. Both families agree that the natures with their proper energies and wills are united hypostatically and naturally without confusion, without change, without division and without separation, and that they are distinguished in thought alone (*te theoria mone*).

5. Both families agree that He who wills and acts is always the one hypostasis of the Logos incarnate.

6. Both families agree in rejecting interpretations of Councils which do not fully agree with the Horos of the Third Ecumenical Council and the Letter (433) of Cyril of Alexandria to John of Antioch.

7. The Orthodox agree that the Oriental Orthodox will continue to maintain their traditional Cyrillian terminology of "one nature of the Logos incarnate" ("*mia physis tou Theou Logou sesarkomene*"), since they acknowledge the double consubstantiality of the Logos which Eutyches denied. The Orthodox also use this terminology. The Oriental Orthodox agree that the Orthodox are justified in their use of the two-natures formula, since they acknowledge that the distinction is "in thought alone" ("*te theoria mone*"). Cyril interpreted correctly this use in his letter to John of Antioch and his letters to Acacius of Melitene (PG 77, 184-201), to Eulogius (PG 77, 224-228) and to Succensus (PG 77, 228-245).

8. Both families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils, which form our common heritage. In relation to the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox state that for them the above points 1-7 are the teachings also of the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, while the Oriental Orthodox consider this statement of the Orthodox as their interpretation. With this understanding, the Oriental Orthodox respond to it positively. In relation to the teaching of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of

the Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox agree that the theology and practice of the veneration of icons taught by that Council are in basic agreement with the teaching and practice of the Oriental Orthodox from ancient times, long before the convening of the Council, and that we have no disagreements in this regard.

9. In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology as well as of the above common affirmations, we have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways. It is this common faith and continuous loyalty to the Apostolic Tradition that should be the basis of our unity and communion.

10. Both families agree that all the anathemas and condemnations of the past which now divide us should be lifted by the Churches in order that the last obstacle to the full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God. Both families agree that the lifting of anathemas and condemnations will be consummated on the basis that the Councils and Fathers previously anathematized or condemned are not heretical. We therefore recommend to our Churches the following practical steps:

A. The Orthodox should lift all anathemas and condemnations against all Oriental Orthodox Councils and Fathers whom they have anathematised or condemned in the past

B. The Oriental Orthodox should at the same time lift all anathemas and condemnations against all Orthodox Councils and Fathers, whom they have anathematised or condemned in the past

C. The manner in which the anathemas are to be lifted should be decided by the Churches individually.

Trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, Unity and Love, we submit this Agreed Statement and Recommendations to our venerable Churches for their consideration and action, praying that the same Spirit will lead us to that unity for which our Lord prayed and prays.

## Recommendations on Pastoral Issues of the Joint Commission Chambésy, Switzerland, 23-28 September 1990

The Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, at its meeting at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in Chambésy, Geneva, from 23-28 September 1990, received a report from its Joint Pastoral Subcommittee which had met at the Anba Bishoy Monastery in Egypt from 31 January to 4 February, 1990. The report was the starting point for an extended discussion about four types of pastoral issues:

I. Relations among our two families of Churches, and our preparation for unity.

II. Relations of our Churches with other Christian Churches and our common participation in the Ecumenical Movement.

III. Our common service to the world of suffering, need, injustice and conflicts.

IV. Our cooperation in the propagation of our common faith and tradition.

### *I. Relations among our two families of Churches*

1. We feel as a Joint Theological Commission that a period of intense preparation of our people to participate in the implementation of our recommendations and in the restoration of communion of our Churches is needed. To this end we propose the following practical procedure.

2. It is important to plan an exchange of visits by our heads of Churches and prelates, priests and lay people of each one of our two families of Churches to the other.

3. It is important to give further encouragement to exchange of theological professors and students among theological institutions of the two families, for periods varying from one week to several years.

4. In localities where Churches of the two families co-exist, the congregations should organize participation of one group of people—men, women, youth and children, including priests—where possible from one congregation of one family to a congregation of the other, to attend in the latter's Eucharistic worship on Sundays and feast days.

5. Publications

(a) We need to publish, in the various languages of our Churches, the key documents of this Joint Commission with explanatory notes, in small pamphlets to be sold at a reasonable price in all our congregations.

(b) It will be useful also to have brief pamphlets explaining in simple terms the meaning of the Christological terminology and interpreting the variety of terminology taken by various persons and groups in the course of history in the light of our agreed statement on Christology.

(c) We need a book which gives some brief account, both historical and descriptive, of all the Churches of our two families. This should also be produced in the various languages of our peoples, with pictures and photographs as much as possible.

(d) We need to promote brief books of Church History by specialist authors giving a more positive understanding of the divergencies of the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries.

6. Churches of both families should agree that they will not rebaptize members of each other, for recognition of the baptism of the Churches of our two families, if they have not already done so.

7. Churches should initiate bilateral negotiations for facilitating each other in using each other's church premises in special cases where any of them is deprived of such means.

8. Where conflicts arise between Churches of our two families, e.g. a) marriages consecrated in one Church being annulled by a bishop of another Church; b) marriages

between members of our two families, being celebrated in one Church over against the other; c) or children from such marriages being forced to join the one Church against the other, the Churches involved should come to bilateral agreements on the procedure to be adopted until such problems are finally solved by our union.

9. The Churches of both families should be encouraged to look into the theological curriculum and books used in their institutions and make necessary additions and changes in them with the view to promoting better understanding of the other family of Churches. They may also profitably devise programs for instructing the pastors and people in our congregations on the issues related to the union of the two families.

*II. Relations of our Churches with other Christian Churches in the world*

10. Our common participation in the Ecumenical Movement and our involvement in the World Council of Churches needs better co-ordination to make it more effective and fruitful for the promotion of the Faith, which was once delivered to the saints, in the context of the Ecumenical Movement. We could have a preliminary discussion of this question at the Seventh Assembly of the WCC at Camberra, Australia, in February 1991, as well as in regional and national councils of Churches and work out an appropriate scheme for more effective co-ordination of our efforts.

11. There are crucial issues in which our two families agree fundamentally and have disagreements with the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. We could organize small joint consultations on issues like:

(a) the position and role of the woman in the life of the Church and our common Orthodox response to the contemporary problem of other Christian communities concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood,

(b) pastoral care for mixed marriages between Orthodox and heterodox Christians,

(c) marriages between Orthodox Christians and members of other religions,

(d) the Orthodox position on dissolution or annulment of marriage, divorce and separation of married couples,

(e) abortion.

12. A joint consultation should be held on the burning problem of proselytism, vis-à-vis religious freedom, to draw up the framework of an agreement with other Churches, for the procedure to be followed when an Orthodox or Oriental Orthodox person or family wants to join another (Catholic or Protestant) Church or vice-versa.

13. A special joint consultation should be held on the theology and practice of Uniatism in the Roman Catholic Church, as a prelude to a discussion with the Roman Catholic Church on this subject.

14. We need to have another joint consultation to co-ordinate the results of the several bilateral conversations now going on or held in the past by Churches of our two families with other Catholic and Protestant Churches.

*III. Our common service to the world of suffering, need, injustice and conflicts*

15. We need to think together how best we could co-ordinate our existing schemes for promoting our humanitarian and philanthropic projects in the socio-ethnic context of our peoples and of the world at large. This would entail our common approach to such problems as:

(a) hunger and poverty,

(b) sickness and suffering,

(c) political, religious and social discrimination,

(d) refugees and victims of war,

(e) youth, drugs and unemployment,

(f) the mentally and physically handicapped,
(g) the old and the aged.

*IV Our co-operation in the propagation of the Christian Faith*

16. We need to encourage and promote mutual co-operation as far as possible in the work of our inner mission to our people, i.e., in instructing them in the Faith, and how to cope with modern dangers arising from contemporary secularism, including cults, ideologies, materialism, AIDS, homosexuality, the permissive society, consumerism, etc.

17. We also need to find a proper way for collaborating with each other and with other Christians in the Christian mission to the world without undermining the authority and integrity of the local Orthodox Churches.

## Communiqué of the Joint Commission, Chambésy, Switzerland, 1-6 November 1993

Following the mandate of their Churches, the Joint Commission for the Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches held their fourth meeting at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambésy, Geneva, Switzerland between 1-6 November 1993 to consider the procedure for the restoration of full communion.

The official representatives of the two Orthodox families of Churches and their advisors met in an atmosphere of prayer and warm, Christian, cordial, brotherly love. They experienced the gracious and generous hospitality of His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomaios I, through His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, in the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The 30 participants came from Albania, Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Greece, India, Lebanon, Poland, Romania, Russia, Switzerland, Syria, the United Kingdom and U.S.A.

The plenary meetings of the Joint Commission were co-chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland and His Eminence Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette. His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos in his inaugural address explained the procedure which was to be followed and stressed that "The present Meeting of the Full Joint Theological Commission for the Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches is of the utmost importance not only for evaluating correctly the truly historic theological work of our Commission which has already been accomplished in our previous meetings, but also for facilitating the necessary ecclesiastical procedures for the restoration of full communion".

After the inaugural meeting, each side met separately to consider papers prepared on the following subjects:

- What is the competent ecclesiastical authority from each side for the lifting of the anathemas and what are the presuppositions for the restoration of ecclesiastical communion?
- Which anathemas of which synods and persons could be lifted in accordance with the proposal of paragraph 10 of the Second Common Statement?
- What is the canonical procedure from each side for the lifting of the anathemas and the restoration of ecclesiastical communion?
- How could we understand and implement the restoration of ecclesiastical communion in the life of our Church?
- What are the canonical and liturgical consequences of full communion?

They produced two Reports which were presented to the plenary meeting for clarifications and discussion on the third day of the proceedings. As a result of these discussions, the Oriental Orthodox presented a document of Response which opened the way for further discussions in the plenary. A drafting committee consisting of H.E. Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette, H.E. Metropolitan Gregorios Yohana Ibrahim of Aleppo, H.E. Archbishop Mesrob Krikorian from the Oriental Orthodox side and Professors Fr. John Romanides, Fr. George Dragas and Vlassios Phidas from the Orthodox side were appointed to prepare appropriate Proposals to the two Church families on the lifting of anathemas from each side and restoring full communion among them. The text of these proposals, unanimously agreed upon after discussion in plenary session, is as follows:

### *Proposals For Lifting Of Anathemas*

In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology at St. Bishoy Monastery 1989 and our Second Agreed Statement at Chambésy 1990, the representatives of both

Church families agree that the lifting of anathemas and condemnations of the past can be consummated on the basis of their common acknowledgement of the fact that the Councils and Fathers previously anathematized or condemned are Orthodox in their teachings. In the light of our four unofficial consultations (1964, 1967, 1970, 1971) and our three official meetings which followed on (1985, 1989, 1990), we have understood that both families have loyally maintained the authentic Orthodox Christological doctrine, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they may have used Christological terms in different ways.

1. The lifting of anathemas should be made unanimously and simultaneously by the Heads of all the Churches of both sides, through the signing of an appropriate ecclesiastical Act, the content of which will include acknowledgement from each side that the other one is Orthodox in all respects.

2. The lifting of anathemas should imply:
   a) that restoration of full communion for both sides is to be immediately implemented;
   b) that no past condemnation, synodical or personal, against each other is applicable any more;
   c) that a catalogue of Diptychs of the Heads of the Churches should be agreed upon to be used liturgically.

3. At the same time the following practical steps should be taken:
   a) The Joint Sub-commission for Pastoral issues should continue its very important task according to what had been agreed at the 1990 meeting of the Joint Commission.
   b) The Co-Chairmen of the Joint Committee should visit the Heads of the Churches with the view to offering fuller information on the outcome of the dialogue.
   c) A Liturgical Subcommittee should be appointed by both sides to examine the liturgical implications arising from the restoration of communion and to propose appropriate forms of con-celebration.
   d) Matters relating to ecclesiastical jurisdiction should be left to be arranged by the respective authorities of the local Churches according to common canonical and synodical principles.

The two Co-Chairmen of the Joint Commission with the two Secretaries of the Dialogue should make provisions for the production of appropriate literature explaining our common understanding of the Orthodox faith which has led us to overcome the divisions of the past, and also coordinating the work of other Subcommittees.

**Communiqué Issued by**
**the Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee for Dialogue**
**between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches**
**Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate,**
**Chambésy, Switzerland, 13 March 2005**

The Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee for Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches convened at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva, from 10-13 March 2005, upon the invitation of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, to whom we express our utmost gratitude for the generous hospitality that he has extended to us. The purpose of this meeting was to study the outstanding issues and prospects for continuation of the work of the Joint Theological Commission. The work of this special Inter-Orthodox Committee was carried out under the chairmanship of the Orthodox Co-President of the Joint Theological Commission, His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France. Distinguished theologians, clergy and lay people, specialists in this area who had been members in the past of either the Joint Theological Commission, or the Sub-committees on pastoral and liturgical issues, were invited and participated, after the prior agreement of Their Beatitudes, the Primates of the local Holy Orthodox Churches.

Following the message of greeting from the Director of the Orthodox Centre, His Eminence Metropolitan Jeremiah of Switzerland, which was read by His Grace, Bishop Makarios of Lampsakos, the following presentations were made during the proceedings of the Committee: a) on the progress to date and the future prospects of the Dialogue, by the President of this Committee, His Eminence, Metropolitan Emmanuel of France; b) on the criteria for evaluating the theological work of the Joint Theological Commission and on the reactions to these criteria, by the Orthodox Secretary of this Committee, the Esteemed Professor Vlassios Phidas; c) on the importance of the agreement that has been reached on the Christological issue, and on the refutation of those who objected to the interpretation of the recognition of the "Orthodoxy" of the non-Chalcedonians by St. John of Damascus, by the Esteemed Professor George Martzelos; d) on the obscurities of paragraph 8 of the 2nd Agreed Theological Statement, and on the need for these to be clarified, by the Honourable Archon, Mr. Albert Laham; e) on the theological difficulties of Theological Dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, by the Professor of the Theological Academy of Moscow, Reverend Valentine Asmus; f) on the bilateral relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, and on the reservations of the Russian Orthodox Church with respect to the text of the Agreed Statements, by the Esteemed Professor of the Theological Academy of Moscow, Mr. Sergei Govorun; and g) on the liturgical problems that have arisen in the rapprochement of the two ecclesiastical families and on ways to address them, by the Esteemed Professor John Fountoulis. His Eminence, Metropolitan Petros of Axum (Patriarchate of Alexandria), His Grace, Bishop Vassilios of Trimythus (Church of Cyprus), the Rev. Dr. Nicolae Necula (Church of Romania), and the Very Rev. Archimandrite Wasrsonofiusz (Church of Poland) participated and contributed constructively to the theological debates during this Committee meeting.

The in-depth presentations and discussions were of a high level, not only due to the critical evaluation of the truly significant theological work carried out by the Joint Theological Commission, in reference always to the various objections that had been raised by various circles, but also due to the planning required for the future mission of the Joint Theological Commission of correcting the obscurities and/or omissions observed and so that the theological work accomplished can be more fully utilised. The presentations, which expressed many theological, ecclesiological and methodological arguments, could be summarized in the following proposals:

1. Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the pre-Chalcedonian Oriental Orthodox Churches is particularly important, as it was proclaimed by the relevant unanimous decision of the 3rd Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference (1986), and must therefore be continued to complete the work of both the Joint Theological Commission and the Sub-Committees on the pastoral and liturgical issues.

2. The Joint Theological Commission has to plan its work, on the one hand in reference to the reservations or criticism expressed, either justified or unjustified, on the ambiguous points in the two Agreed Theological Statements (1989, 1990) and to the consequences deriving from them, and on the other hand in reference to the still pending issues of the two Sub-Committees because only in this way will it be possible not only to demonstrate the significance of the agreement reached on the Christological issue, but to plan and prepare as required for the ecclesiastical body.

3. The ecclesiological importance of recognising and including the doctrinal definitions of the IV, V, VI and VII Ecumenical Synods must be promoted more fully through special studies on their Cyrillian basis, and the Anathemas must be lifted in order to restore ecclesiastical communion; these measures presuppose thorough and integrated research of the theological heritage of both theological traditions and the clarification of the Christological terminology.

4. The planning of the future activities presupposes the immediate assembly, organization, and publication in an attractive special volume of all the presentations and studies, which refer to the disputed theological issues of the Agreed Theological Statements, or to the refutation of the criticism against them, because in this way appropriate arguments will support not only the work that has already been accomplished, but also the future prospects of the work of the Joint Theological Commission and the two Sub-Committees.

## Communiqué Issued by the Working Group of the Joint Commission, Athens, Greece, November 24-25, 2014

Invited by the two Co-Chairmen, HE Metropolitan Emmanuel of France and HE Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette, of the Joint Theological Commission of the two families of the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, and with the blessings and gracious hospitality of the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew, a working group of official delegates met in Athens, 24-25 November 2014, in order to lay down a road map for the future work of the Joint Commission.

The working group reviewed the achievements of the Joint Commission so far, in bringing together the two families of the Orthodox Churches on the basis of our common understanding of the Apostolic faith.

Co-Chairman HE Metropolitan Emmanuel of France in his opening speech pointed out the very high priority accorded by the Orthodox Church to the official Theological Dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. He underlined the common acceptance of the Christological teaching of our common Father St. Cyril of Alexandria and of our common patristic and ecclesiological tradition of the first five centuries as the decisive criterion.

He called for a systematic evaluation of all the theological critiques on the proposals of the Joint Commission and for a theological defence against all prejudices and polemical arguments. He emphasized that unity of the Church is an important dogma of faith and therefore the work of the Commission towards unity is of fundamental doctrinal significance. In order to communicate to the clergy and the people of our Churches the work of the Joint Commission, he suggested regular meetings of the primates of our Churches, exchange of professors, well-prepared meetings of monks from both families and all possible cooperation of Churches at regional level and the Diaspora. The use of print and electronic media to disseminate the efforts for unity was also strongly advocated by Metropolitan Emmanuel.

Co-Chairman HE Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette in his speech gave an interpretation of the First Agreed Statement on Christology of the historic official dialogue between the two families held at St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, in 1989. Highlighting the Christological position of our common Father St. Cyril of Alexandria he pointed out the fact that the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox Church are expressing the same reality when they speak about one composite *hypostasis* of the incarnate Logos. He cited from the Chambésy Statement of the Joint Commission in 1990 saying "that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic Tradition." HE Metropolitan Bishoy also narrated the great efforts he made jointly with the former Co-Chairman HE Damaskinos of blessed memory to visit various local Orthodox Churches on both sides, in order to communicate personally to the local Churches' leadership the good results of the Joint Commission's work.

In the light of the presentations of the two Co-Chairmen, an intense and fruitful discussion followed. There were also separate meetings of the families to discuss the remaining issues from the perspective of each family as well as to find the common way forward.

Following are some of the proposals, recommendations and concerns expressed by the working group.

1. Gratefully acknowledging the guidance of the Holy Spirit so far in the work of the Joint Commission, the working group called for the continuation of the dialogue in all earnestness and for a formal meeting of the full Commission at an appropriate time at the earliest.

2. While acknowledging the good work of the Sub-Committees on theological, canonical, liturgical and pastoral issues, the working group recognized that some Churches raised some serious issues that require further clarification such as lifting of anathemas, common enumeration of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, mutual recognition of Saints and some questions on Christology. Some solutions to these issues have also been proposed in the Sub-Committees, but they need to be communicated effectively to the clergy, monks, schools of theology and people on both sides to arrive at a consensus.

The working group expressed deep concern over the situation of our Churches especially in the Middle East. It appealed to the international community and to all concerned for the release of the two abducted Bishops, Metropolitan Mor Gregorios Youhanna Ibrahim and Metropolitan Boulos Yasigi. The group felt that the situation of Christianity today urgently necessitates Orthodox unity and the promoting of a healthy interfaith dialogue.

It was noted that three local Churches from the Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Romania) and three Churches from the Oriental Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Malankara-India), had already declared their acceptance of the agreed statements and proposals from the Joint Commission. The working group that met in the 50th year of the first unofficial dialogue meeting between the Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox took place in Aarhus, Denmark, 1964. Hence, in the spirit of jubilee the group called for liberation from the misapprehensions and separations of the past, while praying for the joyful common celebration of our life together in Jesus Christ our Saviour in mutual forgiveness, reconciliation and communion in love and truth for the glory of the Triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

# B. Joint Declarations, Agreements, Statements, and Official Letters

## Joint Declaration of the Patriarchs of the Middle East St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, 16-19 November 1987[1]

On the Unity of the Faith between the Chalcedonians and the Non-Chalcedonian Churches

We give thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for the joy of the spiritual communion which has been granted to us from on high, and which has allowed our meeting in the holy monastery of St. Bishoy, Egypt, on the occasion of the Executive Committee meeting of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), 16-19 November 1987, on the invitation of our sister Coptic Orthodox Church which has welcomed us with good will.

It is the first time that we, the Primates of the Byzantine and Oriental Churches, that are members of the MECC and that have their seat in the Middle East, meet to reflect together on our common task in the current situation in the Middle East.

While reflecting once more on the deeply-rooted inner unity of faith existing between our two families of Churches, we rejoice in realizing how much we have advanced in our rediscovery and in the growing consciousness among our people of that inner unity of Faith in the Incarnate Lord.

Attempts by theologians of both families aimed at overcoming the misunderstandings inherited from the past centuries of alienation towards one another have happily reached the same conclusion that fundamentally and essentially we on both sides have preserved the same Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of diverse formulations and resulting controversies.

We welcome all the efforts made on the international or regional levels, and noting in particular that which has been done on the regional level, in the meetings of Balamand, Lebanon in 1972, and of Pendeli, Greece, in 1978, we affirm our togetherness in the true understanding of the Person of Christ, who being God of God, only-begotten Son of the Father, became truly man, fully assumed our human nature without losing or diminishing or changing His Divine Nature. Being perfect God, He became perfect man, without confusion, without separation.

In the light of this conviction, we recommend that the official dialogue on both the regional (Middle East) and the international levels be pursued through common endeavours in the healthy process of clarifying and enhancing our commonness in faith and dispelling the misapprehensions of the past, thus preparing the way towards the full recovery of our communion.

We urge our people to continue to deepen their consciousness in the deep commonality of faith and to relate to one another as brothers and sisters who share the same Gospel, the same faith and the same commission entrusted to them by their common Lord.

Thanks be to God that ancient controversies and rivalries have given way to a new era of sincere and open dialogue and communal brotherhood. We pray that these most difficult and crucial times in the Middle East may stimulate all of us to see more

[1] I. Bria, *The Sense of Ecumenical Tradition* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), 117. In French in *Service Orthodoxe Presse* 126 (March 1988).

clearly the command of our Lord Jesus Christ so that we may be one according to his will (John 10) and His prayer (John 17).

Pope Shenouda III, Coptic Orthodox Church
Patriarch Parthenios III, Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria
Patriarch Ignatios IV, Orthodox Church of Antioch
Catholicos Karekin II, Armenian Apostolic Church, Patriarchate of Cilicia
(Patriarch Mor Ignatius Zakka I. Iwas, Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch, not present at the meeting, also expressed his accord with the statement.)

## Statement of the Coptic Orthodox Synod on the Theological Dialogue
## Letter of Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette
## to Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland
## Egypt, November 1990

The following letter was sent by Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette, General Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church, and co-president of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue, to Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland, the other co-president of the Joint Commission, in November 1990.

Dear Brother in Christ,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ, hoping to be always together in the charity of love and cooperation would like to inform Your Eminence that the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church, headed and presided by His Holiness Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St Mark, on its meeting in Cairo on 12 November 1990, has accepted the Agreed Statement of our [last] commission, considering that the lifting of the anathemas will happen simultaneously as stated in the agreement which we have signed in Chambésy on 28 September 1990. Also the same Synod had accepted the Agreed Statement of St Bishoy Monastery (June 1989) in its previous meeting of June 1990. With my best wishes to Your Eminence for the success of our Joint Commission in its mandate.

Yours in Christ,

[signed]
Metropolitan Bishoy

## Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, Damascus, 12 November 1991

### On the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches

To the Members of the Holy Synod of Antioch.

Prayers to God and fraternal greetings in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

It is our pleasure to inform you that pertaining to the Holy Synod decision concerning our unity with the Holy Syrian Orthodox Church, a meeting was held in Damascus at the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate on 22 July, 1991. The following hierarchs attended the meeting: His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius (Zakka) I. (Iwas), His Beatitude Patriarch Ignatios IV, Metropolitan George Khodr; Metropolitan Malatius Barnaba, Metropolitan Aphram Barsoum, Metropolitan Isaac Saka, and Bishop Paul Al-Souki. After the discussion the participants consented to issue a draft, which was preceded by a letter and whose contents were agreed upon to be discussed at the next meeting. It will assume its official status after the agreement of the Holy Synod, and what it sees appropriate to the matter during the forthcoming Holy Synod meeting.

The Lord is always with us.

Patriarch Ignatios IV
Damascus, Syria

### A Synodal and Patriarchal Letter by Patriarch Ignatios IV Damascus[1]

To All Our Children, Protected By God, of the Holy See of Antioch

Beloved:

You must have heard of the continuous efforts for decades by our Church with the sister Syrian Orthodox Church to foster a better knowledge and understanding of both Churches, whether on the dogmatical or pastoral level. These attempts are nothing but a natural expression that the Orthodox Churches, and especially those within the Holy See of Antioch, are called to articulate the will of the Lord that all may be one, just as the Son is One with the Heavenly Father (John 10:30).

It is our duty and that of our brothers in the Syrian Orthodox Church to witness to Christ in our Eastern region where He was born, preached, suffered, was buried and rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sent down His Holy and Life-Giving Spirit upon His holy apostles.

All the meetings, the fellowship, the oral and written declarations meant that we belong to One Faith even though history had manifested our division more than the aspects of our unity.

All this has called upon our Holy Synod of Antioch to bear witness to the progress of our Church in the See of Antioch towards unity that preserves for each Church its authentic Oriental heritage whereby the one Antiochian Church benefits from its sister Church and is enriched by its traditions, literature and holy rituals.

Every endeavour and pursuit in the direction of the coming together of the two Churches is based on the conviction that this orientation is from the Holy Spirit, and it will give the Eastern Orthodox image more light and radiance, that it has lacked for centuries before.

[1] Unofficial translation from the original Arabic text

Having recognized the efforts done in the direction of unity between the two Churches, and being convinced that this direction was inspired by the Holy Spirit and projects a radiant image of Eastern Christianity overshadowed during many centuries, the Holy Synod of the Church of Antioch saw the need to give a concrete expression of the close fellowship between the two Churches, the Syrian Orthodox Church and the Eastern Orthodox for the edification of their faithful.

Thus, the following decisions were taken:

1) We affirm the total and mutual respect of the spirituality, heritage and Holy Fathers of both Churches. The integrity of both the Byzantine and Syriac liturgies is to be preserved.

2) The heritage of the Fathers in both Churches and their traditions as a whole should be integrated into Christian education curricula and theological studies. Exchanges of professors and students are to be enhanced.

3) Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons.

4) Meetings between the two Churches, at the level of their Synods, according to the will of the two Churches, will be held whenever the need may arise.

5) Every Church will remain the reference and authority for its faithful, pertaining to matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, adoption etc.)

6) If bishops of the two Churches participate at a holy baptism or funeral service, the one belonging to the Church of the baptized or deceased will preside. In case of a holy matrimony service, the bishop of the bridegroom's Church will preside.

7) The above mentioned is not applicable to the concelebration in the Divine Liturgy.

8) What applies to bishops applies equally to the priests of both Churches.

9) In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, including the Divine Liturgy, pastoral duties and holy matrimony He will keep an independent record for each Church and transmit that of the sister Church to its authorities.

10) If two priests of the two Churches happen to be in a locality where there is only one Church, they take turns in making use of its premises.

11) If a bishop from one Church and a priest from the sister Church happen to concelebrate a service, the first will preside even when it is the priest's parish.

12) Ordinations into the holy orders are performed by the authorities of each Church for its own members. It would be advisable to invite the faithful of the sister Church to attend.

13) Godfathers, godmothers (in baptism) and witnesses in holy matrimony can be chosen from the members of the sister Church.

14) Both Churches will exchange visits and will cooperate in the various areas of social, cultural and educational work.

We ask God's help to continue strengthening our relations with the sister Church, and with other Churches, so that we all become one community under one Shepherd.

12 November 1991
Patriarch Ignatios IV
Damascus

## Statement of the Romanian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue Decisions of the Holy Synod, Bucharest, Romania, 8-9 December 1994[1]

The following text is from the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, contained in a letter of Patriarch Teoctist addressed to the Orthodox co- President Metropolitan Damaskinos of the Joint Theological Commission:

Following the meeting in Bucharest on the 25th October 1994 of the two co-Presidents of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches with the members of the Commission of the Romanian Orthodox Church for the theological dialogue between the two families of Churches, the Holy Synod of our Church, in its session of 8-9 December 1994, analyzing the conclusions of that meeting, and based on the documents elaborated during the official meetings of the Joint Commission for the dialogue, has decided:

1. To take note of and to approve the conclusions of the dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, as the result of the talks held at the Patriarchal Residence in Bucharest by the members of the Commission of the Romanian Orthodox Church for the theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the two co-Presidents of the Joint Commission of the dialogue;

2. To take into consideration, on the one hand, the special context in which the anathemas were pronounced, a context which was characterized by division, by the absence of a consensus in the formulation of the confession of the faith, as well as by the absence of fraternal charity, and, on the other hand, the current context in which the lifting of anathemas is discussed, and which is characterized by a spirit of reconciliation, of mutual forgiveness and of the common confession of the same content of the common faith;

3. To consider that the equivalent of the canonical authority of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon can today be represented by the consensus of the Churches organized in Holy Local Councils (national, autocephalous and autonomous), belonging to the Byzantine Orthodox family as well as to the Oriental Orthodox family. Consequently, the possibility of the real lifting of the anathemas is to be studied, through the consensus of the Holy Local Councils expressed by the signatures placed on common agreed text, and then, by a ceremonial concelebration and Eucharistic communion of the Primates of these Churches, gathered together in a joint Orthodox conference;

4. To give the professors of Universal Church History and Patristics of the Faculties of Theology of the Romanian Patriarchate the task of studying the results of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches with a view of revising the chapters concerning the family of Oriental Orthodox Churches;

5. To present the results of the dialogue between the two families of Orthodox Churches to gatherings of clergy in order to inform the priests and to contribute to the creation of a favourable opinion of these results within our Church;

6. To communicate all these decisions to the Secretariat of the Joint Commission for the international theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, in Geneva.

It is our hope that the decisions taken by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church will help to advance us on the way which is opening before us and which leads to the fulfilment of complete communion between the two families of Orthodox Churches.

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[1] Translation from: *Episkepsis*, No. 516 (March 1995)

## Statement of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue, December 1994[2]

Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow in December 1994

The following text was issued in the decisions of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in December 1994 and refers primarily to the Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches of the Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue of 1990.

The Synod of hierarchs, having heard the report of the Theological Commission of the Holy Synod on the question of the Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches [1990] between the Joint Commission between the Theological Dialogue of the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, presented by His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk, President of the Theological Commission, has decided:

1. To approve the report of the Synodal Theological Commission;

2. To judge that the "Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to Churches" cannot be considered as a definitive text and that it is necessary for the Joint Commission of the Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches to continue its work;

3. To give to the Synodal Theological Commission the task of preparing a more detailed study of the previous meetings of theologians of both sides as well as of the discussions with the members of the theological dialogue from other Orthodox Churches. Following these steps the Russian Orthodox Church will make its opinion known to the Joint Commission of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches;

4. Having in mind the need for the People of God, who—according to the message of the Eastern Patriarchs—are the "guardian of the ancient piety", to participate in the cause of unity, the Synod considers that the time has come for organizing a discussion of the question with the participation of the whole Church.

[2] Translation from *Episkepsis* 516 (March 1995).

## Statements of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue Decisions of the Holy Synod, Moscow, Russia, February 1997

Having heard the report of the Synodal Theological Commission of the Russian Orthodox Church presented by His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch of all Belarus, on the history and theological pre-conditions for participation in the work of international Christian organizations and in bilateral dialogues with non-Orthodox Churches, and also on the dialogue between the Orthodox and the Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches, the blessed Bishops' Council decided:

To approve the report of the Synodal Theological Commission.

(...) 4. Having considered the information on the dialogue between the Orthodox and the Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches, to welcome the spirit of fraternity, mutual understanding and common aspiration to be faithful to the Apostolic and Patristic Tradition expressed by the Joint Commission of the theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches in "The Second Agreed Statement and Recommendations to the Churches" (Chambésy, Switzerland, 1990). "The Statement" should not be regarded as a final document sufficient for the restoration of full communion between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches as it contains ambiguities in some Christological formulations. To express hope in this regard that Christological formulations should be clarified in the course of studying the questions pertaining to the restoration of church communion between the two families of Churches of the Orthodox tradition (of the Orthodox Churches).

5. To note that the Russian Orthodox Church has special historical and ecclesiastical reasons and grounds to promote the success of the dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Our Church throughout her history has protected and defended the Orthodox East. An obvious example are the activities of the Imperial Palestine Society and of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem, the works of Bishop Kyrill Naumov and Archimandrite Antonin Kapustin, the activities of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky in the cause of reunion with the Coptic Church, of Prof. V. Bolotov of reunion with the Urmi Assyrian Nestorians, and of Prof. B. Turaev on the rapprochement with the Ethiopian Church.

5. To entrust the Holy Synod and under its guidance the Department for External Church Relations, the Education Committee, the Department for Religious Education and Catechization, the Department for Mission and the Publications Board to develop a plan of scholarly conferences and symposiums, of the publication of theological and historical and informative nature which would help introduce clergymen and faithful of our Church to the problems and development of the theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

## Pastoral Agreement between the Coptic Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Alexandria, signed by Patriarchs Petros VII and Shenouda III, 2001[1]

Since the Holy Synods of both the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa have already accepted the outcome of the official dialogue on Christology between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, including the two official agreements: the first on Christology signed in June 1989 in Egypt and the second also on Christology and on the lifting of anathemas and restoration of full communion signed in Geneva 1990, in which it is stated that "In the light of our agreed statement on Christology (...), we have now clearly understood that both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of Apostolic tradition". It was agreed to have mutual recognition of the sacrament of baptism, based on what St. Paul wrote, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). But since up until now we are waiting for the responses of the Holy Synods of some other Churches in both families, the restoration of full communion is not yet reached between the two sides of the bilateral dialogue. And due to the pastoral consequences and implications caused by mixed Christian marriages between the members of the two Patriarchates of Alexandria, having the majority of their people living in the same countries. Those marriages being difficult to perform in both Churches at the same time or in concelebration. The result is that many sensitivities are created between the two families of the partners of such marriages. Those sensitivities which extend even after the marriage and may affect the relation between the two communities of Churches. For those mentioned reasons, the Holy Synods of both Patriarchates have agreed to accept the sacrament of marriage which is conducted in either Church with the condition that it is conducted for two partners not belonging to the same Patriarchate of the other Church from their origin. Both the Bride and the Groom should carry a valid certificate from his/her own Patriarchate that he/she has a permit of marriage and indicating the details of his/her marriage status up to date. Each of the two Patriarchates shall also accept to perform all of its other sacraments to that new family of Mixed Christian Marriage.

It is agreed that the Patriarchate which shall perform the marriage shall be responsible for any marriage problems that may happen concerning this certain marriage, taking into consideration the unified marriage laws signed by the heads of Churches in Egypt in the year 1999. Each Patriarchate shall preserve its right not to give its sacraments to any persons whom she does not find fulfilling its canons according to the Apostolic Tradition.

[1] The English translation is available at http:/www.greece.org/gopatalex (last accessed June 20, 2016).

### The Epistle of Cyril of Alexandria to John of Antioch (433)[1]

After the schism between the Alexandrians and Antiochians at the Council of Ephesus (431), efforts were made for reconciliation. At last reunion was attained through a dogmatic formula written by the Antiochian side, in which the Antiochians accepted the teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria. Expressing his great joy St. Cyril answered with the following letter. With this simple statement of reconciliation, Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria and Patriarch John of Antioch agreed to end the schism and to restore communion between the two local Churches. This may prove to be an important historic model.

To my Lord, beloved brother, and fellow-minister John, Cyril, greetings in the Lord.

"Let the Heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad", for "the middle-wall of the hedge" has been broken down and the distress has been made to cease and the cause of all dissension has been removed, Christ our common Saviour rewarding His Churches with peace, the most Orthodox and God-beloved Emperors, moreover, inviting us thereto, who, having become most excellent imitators of ancestral Orthodoxy, preserve the right faith sure and unshaken in their own souls: moreover, they make a special care of His holy Churches, that they themselves may have renowned glory for ever and render their empire most illustrious: to whom also the Lord of Hosts assigns blessings with a rich hand, and permits them to prevail over their antagonists and graces them with victory. For He might not speak falsely who said, "As I live, saith the Lord, them that honour Me I will honour".

When, then, my lord Paul, the brother and fellow-minister most dear to God, arrived at Alexandria, we were filled with joy—and very reasonably, seeing that such a man was acting as mediator, and had elected to encounter excessive toils in order to vanquish the envy of the devil and to heal divisions and, by the removal of the stumbling-blocks cast between us, to crown both our Churches and yours with unanimity and peace. It is needless to recount the ground of their division: better is it, I take it, to think and speak rather of matters which befit a time of peace.

Delighted were we at our intercourse with that most pious man, who probably thought that he would have no little difficulty in persuading us that it was a duty to unite the Churches in peace and to stop the laughter of the heterodox and to blunt the sting of the devil's contumacy. But he found us so readily disposed for this that he had absolutely no trouble at all; for we remembered the words of the Saviour, "My peace I give to you, My peace I leave with you"; moreover, we have been taught to pray, "O Lord our God, give us peace, for Thou gavest us all things". So that if one becomes a participator in the peace which is abundantly supplied by God, he will not lack any good thing.

But that the dissension which arose between the Churches was quite needless and inexcusable we have now been fully convinced, since my lord the most God-beloved bishop Paul has proffered a paper which contained an unimpeachable confession of the faith, which he affirmed had been drawn up by thy Holiness and the most pious bishops

[1] Reprinted from: T. H. Bindley, *The Oecumenical Documents of the Faith: the Creed of Nicaea, Three Epistles of Cyril, the Tome of Leo, the Chalcedonian Definition*, ed. with introduction and notes by T. Herbert Bindley, fourth edition revised with introduction and notes by F. W. Green (London: *Methuen*, 1950).

in that place. The document is as follows, and it is inserted in this our letter word for word:

Now in the matter of how we think and speak concerning the Virgin Theotokos and the manner of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten Son of God, we must briefly state, not by way of supplement [to the Nicene Creed], but in the nature of full belief, as we have held from the first, having received it both from the divine Scriptures and from the tradition of the holy Fathers, making no addition at all to the Creed of the holy Fathers put forth at Nicaea. For, as we have just said, it suffices both for all knowledge of Orthodoxy and for the exclusion of all heretical blasphemy. And we *will* state it not daring impossibilities, but in the acknowledgement of our own infirmity, to exclude those who attack us on the ground that we are looking into things beyond the power of man.

We confess, then, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, Perfect God and Perfect Man of a rational soul and body; before the ages begotten from the Father as to His Godhead, and in the last days the Self-same for us and for our salvation, (born) of Mary the Virgin as to his Manhood; the same co-essential with the Father as to Godhead and co-essential with us as to Manhood, for there was a Union of Two Natures, whereby we confess One Christ, One Son, One Lord. And according to this idea of the unconfused Union we confess the Holy Virgin to be the Theotokos, because that God the Word was incarnate, and lived as Man, and from the very conception united to Himself the temple which He took of her.

And with regard to the evangelic and apostolic sayings concerning the Lord, we know that theologians make some common, as relating to One Person, and distinguish others, as relating to Two Natures, interpreting the God-befitting ones of the Godhead of Christ, and the lowly ones of His Humanity.

On reading these holy words and finding that we ourselves also thus think— for "there is one Lord, One Faith, One Baptism"—we gave glory to God the Saviour of the world, and congratulated each other that both our Churches and yours hold a faith agreeing with the God-breathed Scriptures and with the tradition of the Holy Fathers. But then I learnt that certain of those who are to be censorious were buzzing around like fierce wasps, and were spitting out villainous words against me as though I said that the holy Body of Christ was brought down from Heaven and was not (taken) from the holy Virgin, I thought it necessary to add a few words on this topic in answer to them. O foolish ones, knowing only how to accuse falsely! How were ye thus mentally perverted so as to have fallen sick of such monstrous folly? For it is your absolute duty clearly to understand that well-nigh the whole of our contest for the faith has been waged round our affirmation that the holy Virgin is *Theotokos*. But if we say that the holy Body of Christ our common Saviour is from Heaven and was not made from her, how could she be any longer understood to be *Theotokos*? For whom has she at all brought forth, if it is not true that she begat after the flesh Emmanuel? Let those, then, who have prated these things about me be ridiculed; for the blessed prophet Isaiah did not lie when he said, "Behold the Virgin shall be with Child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel"; and altogether truly did the holy Gabriel speak to the blessed Virgin, "Fear not Mary, for thou didst find favour with God; and behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and thou shalt call His Name Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins". But when we speak of our Lord Jesus Christ being "from Heaven" and from above, we do not use these expressions as meaning that His Holy Flesh was brought from above and from Heaven, but we follow rather the divinely speaking Paul, who plainly cried, "The first man is from earth, of mould: the Second Man is (the Lord) from Heaven". Moreover, we remember, too, the Saviour saying, "No one hath ascended into Heaven but He that came down from Heaven, the Son of Man"; although He was born according to the Flesh, as I have just said, of the holy Virgin.

But since God the Word who came down from above and from Heaven "emptied Himself, taking servant's form" and was called "Son of Man", still remaining what He was, that is, God—for He is immutable and unalterable by Nature—He is therefore now conceived of as One with His own flesh, and is said to have come down from Heaven and is, moreover, named "Man from Heaven", being perfect in Godhead and perfect in Manhood, and conceived of as in One Person; for "there is One Lord Jesus Christ" although the difference of the Natures is not ignored, from both of which we say that the ineffable Union hath been wrought.

As for those who say there was a mixture or confusion or blending of God the Word with the flesh, let thy Holiness deem it well to stop their mouths; for it is likely that some are commonly reporting this also about me, as though I had either thought or said so. But I am so far from thinking such a thing that I deem those to be actually out of their mind who can for a moment suppose it possible for a shadow of turning to take place in respect of the Divine Nature of the Word; for He ever abides what He is and has not been changed, neither, indeed, could He ever be changed or be capable of variation. Besides, we all confess the Word of God to be naturally impassible, although in His all-wise administration of the mystery (of the Incarnation) He is seen to attribute to Himself the suffering which befell His own Flesh. Thus likewise, saith the all-wise Peter, "Christ Thou suffered for us in the Flesh", and not in the nature of the ineffable Godhead. For in order that He Himself may be believed to be the Saviour of the world, He takes upon Himself, as I said, the sufferings of His own flesh in accordance with the appropriation inherent in the Incarnation; much as He was foreannounced by the prophet's voice as of Him, "I gave My back to the scourges. My cheeks to blow, and My face I turned not away from the shame of spitting".

Now that we follow in all respects the opinions of the Holy Fathers, but especially those of our blessed and all-renowned Father Athanasius, refusing to be carried in the very least beyond them, let Thy Holiness be persuaded and let no one else feel any doubt. I would also have set down many passages of theirs, guaranteeing my own words from theirs, had not I feared the length of the letter lest it should thereby become tedious.

And we do not suffer the faith to be in any way shaken by anyone, which was defined—I mean the Symbol of the Faith—by our holy Fathers who assembled in their time at Nicaea: nor do we permit either ourselves or others either to alter a word of what is there laid up, or to transgress a single syllable; remembering Him who said, "Remove not the eternal bounds which thy Fathers set". For they themselves were not the speakers, but the Spirit of God even of the Father, who proceedeth indeed from Him, yet is not alien from the Son, at least in respect of substance. Indeed, the words of the holy teachers guarantee this to us. For in the Acts of the Apostles it is written, "When they came opposite Mysia they attempted to go into Bithyria, and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not". The divinely uttering Paul also writes, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God, but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if anyone have not the Spirit of Christ he is not His". But when any of those who are wont to pervert the right turn aside my words to what they please, let not thy Holiness marvel, being aware that those also of every heresy find the starting-points for their own error out of the God-breathed Scriptures, corrupting by their own evil notions what has been rightly written by the Holy Spirit, and pouring over their own heads the unquenchable flame. But since we have learnt that certain persons have corrupted the epistle of our all-renowned Father Athanasius to the blessed Epictetus, which is Orthodox and have published it so that thereby many are injured, we have therefore, in our thought of something useful and necessary for the brethren, sent duplicates to thy Holiness made from ancient copies which are here with us, and which are free from error.

The Lord shall keep thee in good health and praying for us, most honoured brother.

## The Nature of Christ (extracts)[1]

***Pope Shenouda III***

(p. 1) The Lord Jesus Christ is God Himself, the Incarnate Logos Who took to Himself a perfect manhood. His Divine nature is one with his human nature yet without mingling, confusion or alteration; a complete Hypostatic Union. Words are inadequate to describe this union. It was said, that without controversy, "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh". (I Tim. 3:16).

As this union is permanent, never divided nor separated, we say in the liturgy that His Godhead never departed from His manhood for a single moment nor even for a twinkle of an eye.

The Divine nature (God the Word) was united with the human nature which He took of the Virgin Mary by the action of the Holy Spirit (...)

As a result of the unity of both natures-the Divine and the human-inside the Virgin's womb, one nature was formed out of both: "The One Nature of God the Incarnate Logos" as St. Cyril called it.

(p. 4) The term "Monophysites" used for the believers in the One Nature has been intentionally or unintentionally misinterpreted throughout certain periods of history. Consequently, the Coptic and the Syrian Churches in particular were cruelly persecuted because of their belief, especially during the period which started from the Council of Chalcedon held in 451 A.D. and continued to the conquest of the Arabs in Egypt and Syria (about 641). This misinterpretation continued along history as though we believed in one nature of Christ and denied the other nature.

The expression "One Nature" does not indicate the Divine nature alone nor the human nature alone, but it indicates the unity of both natures into One Nature which is "The Nature of the Incarnate Logos".

St. Cyril the Great taught us not to talk about two natures after their unity.

(p. 6) Eutyches said that the human nature was absorbed and dissolved in the Divine nature as a drop of vinegar in the ocean. In this way, he denied the human nature of Christ.

(p. 7) (...) Neither did the Divine nature transmute to the human nature, nor did the human nature transmute to the Divine nature. The Divine nature did not mix with the human nature nor mingle with it, but it was a unity that led to Oneness of Nature.

(p. 8) (...) Just as we say that the human nature is one nature consisting of two elements or natures, we can also say about the Incarnate Logos, that He is one entity of two elements or natures.

(...) All the acts of Christ were attributed to Him as a whole and not to His Divine nature alone (independently) or to His human nature alone.

(...) The union of the soul and body is an intrinsic real union, a Hypostatic one. So is the union of the Divine nature of Christ with the human nature in the Virgin's womb. It is a hypostatic union, self-essential and real and not a mere connection, than separation as Nestorius claimed.

(p. 10) (...) This Only-Begotten Son is the same One who descended from Heaven and was Incarnated. He is God Himself who descended into the Virgin's womb and was incarnated.

(p. 11) (...) It is One Nature (one entity) but has all the properties of two natures.

The complete righteousness which marked the life of our Lord Jesus was due to His Divine as well as His Human will.

(p. 22) Since the Will is One, the Act is necessarily One. Here we do not distinguish between the two natures.

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[1] H.H. Pope Shenouda III, *The Nature of Christ* (Jersey City: St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church, 1999)

## A Misnomer Used Against the Followers of Pope Dioscorus that they are Monophysites[1]

***Metropolitan Bishoy of Damietta***

It became a misnomer used against the followers of Pope Dioscorus that they are Monophysites. On the contrary they always confessed the continuity of existence of the two natures in the one incarnate nature of the Word of God. None of the natures ceased to exist because of the union and the term "*mia physis*" denoting the incarnate nature is completely different from the term "Monophysites". Perhaps the correct nomination should have been the "Cyrillian" or the "Miaphysites" instead of the "Monophysites". For example, when we say *monogenis* (...) we mean that there is a single and unique Son of God who is consubstantial with the Father. The Oriental Orthodox do not believe in a single nature in Jesus Christ but rather a united divine-human nature.

To conclude, our Oriental Orthodox people should realise that the Orthodox can never be Nestorians since they have condemned the Nestorian teaching of the external union of two persons in Jesus Christ and confessed that the Word of God came in His own Person and that the Holy Virgin is Theotokos.

It is also clear that the Orthodox interpretation of the teachings of the four later councils of the Orthodox are the same as the doctrine of the Oriental Orthodox who have always refused both the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies. The two families are called to reinforce each other in their struggle against heresies and to fulfil their call as one body of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

The positive response of the Oriental Orthodox to the Orthodox interpretation is identified by the lifting of anathemas against Orthodox Fathers and Councils, as well as taking use of every positive element in the teaching and acts of the four later councils of the Orthodox.

[1] The Ecumenical Movement in the 20th Century, http://www.metroplit-bishoy.org/english/Dialogues.htm (last accessed in October 2016).

## Severus of Antioch: on Christology
## (Extracts)

The One who is conceived, that is the One whom I spoke about before by announcing: *Hail to you, full of grace, the Lord is with you.* This Lord is the Word of God, one of the three hypostases, the strength of the Father, the Very High, who will cover [you], Christ indeed is the strength and the wisdom of God, the one who, on one side, has no beginning and who is begotten eternally and not bodily as Word of the Father. From you [Mary], on the other side, He was incarnate without change, in an incomprehensible way and without confusion. But He is consubstantial with you, this body which will be conceived and born, which is animated by a reasoning and intellectual soul, and which wants to operate the salvation of the whole human kind and not only one part.

*Homily 2*, translation from Patrologie Orientale, 38, [43] / 287

The One who at the beginning had made man from earth, has been made a little child from the Virgin, taking flesh by the Holy Spirit and from her. His flesh is consubstantial with ours which is animated by a reasoning soul.

*Homily 7*, translation from Patrologie Orientale, 38, [73] / 317

So, from two natures, the divinity and the humanity, which He possesses in a perfect way according to their concept, we understand one [only] Christ, one [only] *prosopon*, one *hypostasis*, one nature incarnate of God the Word (...) Thus 'the Word who became Flesh' means that He became Man without change, while remaining God.

*Homily 23*, translation from Patrologie Orientale, 37, [117, 119]

This is why Christ is also one of two without division; and, because these [elements] from which [comes] this union do not blend, He also shows, without doubt, that the same is on one side from the same essence (*ousia)* as the Father according to the divinity [and] that the same is on the other side as well from the same essence (*ousia*) as us people according to humanity. As when what He is remains what He is, then He became Man without change.

*Homily 93*, translation from Patrologie Orientale, 25, [489-90] / 45-46

## Severus of Antioch on "One Incarnate Nature of God the Word"

***Fr. V. C. Samuel*** [1]

Following Cyril of Alexandria, Severus accepts four phrases with reference to the Incarnation. They are: "of (ek) two natures", "hypostatic union", "one incarnate Nature of God the Word", and "one composite Nature". In his view all these phrases stand together (...) The crucial word in these phrases is "nature" (*physis* or *kyono* in Syriac). As to its meaning, both Severus and the Chalcedonian writers of his time agree that it may be taken either in the sense of *ousia* or in that of *hypostasis*. Severus shows that *ousia* stands for him both as an equivalent of the *eidos* of Plato and as a generic term including all the members of a class. By *hypostasis* (*hypostasis* or *qnumo*) Severus means a concrete particular in which the *ousia* (*ousia* or *ousio)* is individuated (...)

In a long passage in his "Philalethes", Severus discusses the phrase "one incarnate Nature of God the Word". When the Fathers spoke of "one incarnate Nature of God the Word", he writes, "they made it clear that the Word didn't abandon His Nature"; neither did He undergo any "loss or diminution in His *hypostasis*". When they affirmed that "He became incarnate" they made it clear that "the flesh was nothing but flesh, and that it did not come into being by itself apart from the union with the Word (...)".

There are three emphases made by the phrase "one incarnate nature". (1) It was God the Son Himself who became incarnate. (2) In becoming incarnate, He individuated Manhood in union with Himself and made it His very own. (3) The incarnate Word is one Person.

The "one" in the phrase "one incarnate Nature" is not a simple one, so that the characterization "monophysite" cannot be considered applicable to the position of Severus. As "one incarnate nature", Jesus Christ is one composite nature. In the Incarnation, by a divine act of condescension, God the Son willed to be so united with Manhood that the two of them came together, without either of them being lost or diminished. At the same time, their union was so real and perfect that Christ was one composite nature.

In the face of the misunderstanding expressed by the Chalcedonian tradition that the non-Chalcedonian position has ignored the Manhood of Christ, we shall put together the ideas emphasized by Severus on this point.

(1) Christ's Manhood was an individuated Manhood, fully like and continuous with our Manhood, with the single exception that it was absolutely sinless. (2) The Manhood of Christ was individuated only in a hypostatic union with God the Son, and it continued to exist in perfection and reality in that union. Therefore, the Manhood of Christ did not exist independent of its union with God the Son. (3) The union did not lead to a confusion of the Manhood with, or a loss in, the Godhead; and therefore in Christ there were Godhead and Manhood with their respective properties hypostatically united with each other. But the two should not be separated. (4) The Union brought into being one Person, and this One Person is the Person of God the Son in His incarnate state. There is a distinction between the pre-incarnate Son and the incarnate Son, so that the *hypostasis* and *prosopon* of Jesus Christ are not simply the *hypostasis* and *prosopon* of God the Son. (5) The Manhood of Christ was real, perfect, and dynamic in the union.

(...) It was the one incarnate Person who was the subject of all the words and deeds of Christ. This one incarnate Person was the 'one incarnate nature of God the Word' or the 'one composite nature' of the incarnate Son. When we reflect on Him, we can, in our contemplation, distinguish the two natures of Godhead and Manhood and their respective properties and operations.

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[1] Extracts from: Rev. Prof. V. C. Samuel, "Severus on 'One Incarnate Nature of God the Word'," in *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?*, ed. Paulos Gregorios, William H. Lazareth and Nikos A. Nissiotis (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1981), 86-89.

# Further Studies in the Christology of Severus of Antioch*

*Fr. V. C. Samuel*

In my paper on "The Christology of Severus of Antioch" published in the 1973 issue of *Abba Salama*, I have tried to bring out briefly the teaching of Severus on the person of Jesus Christ. It should, however, be noted that neither he nor almost anyone else in his day can be considered academic theologians in our sense of the term. They were rather Church leaders who expounded the faith relative to the doctrinal disputes of their times.

The fifth century witnessed two major divisions of the Christian community. The condemnation of Nestorius by the Council of Ephesus in 431 was not accepted by a section of the Church in the provinces of Syria, and its leaders and their standpoint came to be defended by the Church in Persia. Again, following the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the Church in Egypt and the Eastern parts of the Roman Empire in general was split into two bodies, one accepting the Council and the other rejecting it. These two bodies continued as contending parties in the one Church, each seeking to dominate the sense and declare itself exclusively the Church, till 536. Then they separated as mutually denouncing and condemning churches. In that situation no leading man on either side could be favoured by all, and Severus on his part does not seem to have even tried to attain to that inaccessible goal. He was indeed a violent critic of both the Nestorian and the Chaldeconian positions till his death on 8th February 538[1], and he expounded the Church's faith in the Person of Jesus Christ in apparent opposition to them both. In spite of the fact that since 536 there were three full-fledged Churches, each of them officially claimed to be itself exclusively the Church and implicitly denounced the others as heretical. Here the position of the Chalcedonian side, as it was favoured by the State, was indeed much stronger than either of the other two.

In discussing the significance of Severus, this background of the sixth century Church should be borne in mind. In its light we can discern a lasting importance for the position which Severus has conserved both through the role he played in the dispute and by his many writings. For, unlike the many ecclesiastical divisions which happened in ancient times, those that came into being in consequence of the two conciliar decisions of the fifth century have caused the Christian community to remain disunited ever since, so that the restoration of these Church traditions to unity should be a matter of serious concern. From this point of view Severus and his teaching relative to the issues taken up by the two councils of the fifth century have a significance of their own, because of two reasons. On the one hand, in his day, Severus was indeed the ablest theological scholar at least of the anti-Chalcedonian body, and on the other his teachings offered the basis for this Church tradition to develop its theology *vis à vis* the Council of Chalcedon. In fact, the Julianist movement which put up much resistance to Severus died out as an organized force.

The attempt made in this paper is to bring out the significance of Severus from the point of view of helping the Churches involved in the dispute from ancient times to regain their lost unity. We shall therefore glance into the theological emphases and historical facts within the space available for a paper like this.

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* This article initially appeared in *Ekklesiastikos Pharos*, 58/3-4 (1976): 270-301.

[1] The year of Severus' death is noted differently by different authorities, some giving it as 537, some as 538 and others as 539.

Born in the sixties of the fifth century, Severus lived at a time when the Church in the East was divided. Following the Council of 451, though there was a sudden irruption of violent demonstration against the Counsil in Jerusalem, the combined forces of the Emperor and the Pope could rally a considerable section of the monastic body in the area and bring the situation more or less under control by various methods in a few years' time. But Egypt and other parts of the Orient had a different history. In Egypt Timpothy Aelurus was raised as successor to Dioscorus in 457, and he took up the matter of laying the foundation for a defence of the anti-Chalcedonian movement on patristic and theological grounds. He was able to show that his reason for opposing the Council of Chaldedon was not any clinging to Eutychianism or to a refusal to recognize the human reality of Christ. In his effort to make out that the Council of 451 had deviated from the patristic tradition, he made a collection of quotations from the writings of the fathers, some of which may well have been drawn from Apollinarian and other forgeries. However, by using these excerpts Timothy was able to work out a theological position which was indeed anti-Apollinarian and anti-Eutychian. Thus Timothy may be said to have bequeathed a theological basis for the anti-Chalcedonian movement as a whole. He died in 477 after witnessing the Encyclical of Basiliscus abrogating the Council of Chalcedon, his counter-Encyclical, and Zeno's initial measures in support of the Council. The events of the mid-seventies of the fifth century gave an opportunity for the anti-Chalcedonian side to be strengthened, and Egypt continued its attitude of ignoring Chalcedon. Antioch was controlled by the non-Chalcedonian party, so that no Patriarch who accepted the Council could be appointed there. In Jerusalem, Anastasius who had signed the first Encyclical of Basiliscus continued firm in that stand and his successor Martyrius declared himself openly as a supporter of the anti-Chalcedonian position. Acacius of Constantinople supported the Council more for its ruling with reference to his see than for anything else. It was in this context that Emperor Zeno published his *Henotikon*, with a view to offering a basis other than an acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon for the two sides in the Church, particularly in the East, to unite. It did have a temporary success. Thus in Alexandria Peter Mongus who signed the document was confirmed; in Antioch Peter Fuller came back in 484 after passing through three exiles and held the see till his death in 488. In Jerusalem Martyrius adopted the same position. All the major sees in the East were thus in communion with Acacius of Constantinople.

Zeno died in 491, and his successor Anastasius, who already had his sympathies for the anti-Chalcedonian stand, remained firm on the then established foundation of the *Henotikon*. It should be noted that from 451 to 475 the official policy of the Emperors of Constantinople was to insist on an acceptance of the Council of Chalcedon as the only basis for Christian unity and even for unmolested existence within their borders. This meant that even to live in the Empire one had to accept the Council of 451. But Zeno's *Henotikon* changed this state of affairs and made it possible for all those who agreed in faith as it had been confirmed by the Councils of Nicaea in 325, Constantinople in 381 and Ephesus in 431 to live as subjects of the Empire maintaining communion with one another. This indeed was a time which could be used by both sides to work out a viable basis on which to restore their unity. But, as in the fourth and fifth decades of the fifth century following the reunion of 433 when the Alexandrine and the Antiochene partisans had a golden opportunity to enter into a dialogue and reach an abiding agreement between them but did not, during the four decades following the *Henotikon* of 482 the parties concerned missed a great chance. Instead, each of them went on asserting its position to the utter neglect of that of the other. The Chalcedonian party would not give up the Council for anything, and the other would have nothing to do with it. The latter however was inclined to endorse the

*Henotikon* because of the legal status which it offered them to live in the Empire. But the *Acephali* in Egypt which conflicted with Peter Mongus of Alexandria showed clearly that for the restoration of ecclesiastical unity a categorical rejection of the Council of Chalcedon by the Chalcedonian side was to be pressed.

It is in the face of this development that Chalcedonian leadership felt the need for offering a clear defence of the Council. The first effort in this direction was undertaken by the unknown author or authors of the work of excerpts from the writings of Cyril,[2] which may be considered similar to the collection of patristic quotations made earlier by Timothy Aelurus for the anti-Chalcedonian side. It is in this historical setting that Severus played his role as a Church leader of great theological learning.

## *Severus, the Man and his Activities*

Like Basil of Caesarea and Gregory Nazianzen a century earlier, Severus came from a wealthy and recognized family at Sozopolis, a town in Pisidia in Asia Minor, and like them he had the best education of the times. His family had long been Christian, so that his grandfather Severus was a bishop who had participated in the Council of Ephesus in 431. Following the then held custom in those parts, he had not been baptized early in life. But while carrying on his studies with the intention of adopting a legal career, he was attracted to religion and he received baptism. Now in conformity with the ethos of the times, he betook himself to the monastic life and joined the community of monks built by Peter the Iberian at Maiuma. Later he organized his own community. Severus devoted himself to the study of the Christian scriptures and the writings of the fathers, and the influence of Peter the Iberian[3] led him to identify himself with the anti-Chalcedonian camp.

The monastic body in Palestine was divided. Under the leadership of Sabas and the episcopal supervision of Patriarch Elias of Jerusalem (494-516) the majority of them accepted the Council of Chalcedon, and they tried to exercise pressure to bring the minority also to their point of view. The latter had their concentration in Gaza where Peter the Iberian had his monastery. Now these communities looked up to Severus for leadership. In Jerusalem, although Anastasius and Martyrius in Juvenal's line of succession had supported the anti-Chalcedonian position, Elias did not follow them. The conflict between the two groups was worsened to the advantage of the majority by the activities of a Nubian monk, Nephalius. After agitating against Peter Mongus of Alexandria for his entering into communion with Acacius on the basis of the *Henotikon* and associating himself with the *Acephali* in the hope of replacing Peter as Patriarch, he shifted his residence to Palestine where he joined the Chalcedonian boy. He now wrote in defence of the Council and Severus composed a refutation.[4] Nephalius went further and stirred up trouble for the communities on the side of the anti-Chalcedonian party both from monks and civil officials. Faced with this problem, a deputation of monks under the leadership of Severus went to Constantinople in 507 or 508 in the hope of eliciting assistance from Emperor Anastasius.

The Christian community in the capital was not united. There were people in the city who belonged to the pro-Chalcedonian and the anti-Chalcedonian camps as well as those who defended Eutyches. The pro-Chalcedonian body did not naturally appreciate the intrusion of a learned monk of Severus's standing, who would enter the

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[2] For a reference to this work, see my paper in *Abba Salama* (1973): 128-130.

[3] Peter the Iberian is mentioned below.

[4] For the work of Severus against Nephalius, see *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, Tomus VII.

lists against them, into their territory, especially as he could wield influence with the Emperor. They denounced him as a heretic. Severus had no difficulty in holding his own against such attacks, and he produced a work refuting the tenets of the Eutychian sympathizers. This was not however the end, for Nephalius came there and made common cause with Patriarch Macedonius who was a supporter of the Council of Chalcedon. Since the Emperor took him as his ecclesiastical advisor, his position was not very weak.

Severus was in the capital till 511. During these years there happened two incidents, in which Severus played a significant part. One of these was the publication of the work of Cyrilline excerpts produced by the Chalcedonian side. The publication was intended to make out that the Cyrilline basis on which the anti-Chalcedonian faction was defending its opposition to the Council did not really support them, so that their dissociation from the Chalcedonian body had no justification. The "in two natures" of the Council of 451, for instance, was a legitimate development of the Cyrilline teaching in the face of the danger of Eutychianism, because Cyril had granted the principle that the natures with their properties were different in Christ even after the union. Whether Patriarch Macedonius himself had a hand in compiling the work or not, he used it in support of his stand, and Emperor Anastasius was driven to a state of indecision and bewilderment. In this situation Severus composed his *Philalethes*,[5] refuting the work. The point made by him, as we have shown elsewhere, is that the excerpts did not prove its thesis that Cyril had anticipated the "in two natures" of Chalcedon; on the contrary he had only condemned it. This brought fame to its author among the anti-Chalcedonian circles. The importance of the *Philalethes* for us lies, not in its polemical role against the Chalcedonian position, but in its clarification of the anti-Chalcedonian standpoint in regard to its doctrine of the Person of Christ.

The second development in which Severus was involved was connected with the Theopaschite controversy. In the Arian days the Antiochene province had produced the hymn, "Holy the God, Holy the Strong, Holy the Immortal, Have mercy upon us". Now as a test of Orthodoxy against Nestorianism which the Chalcedonian side was considered to hold an addition of the words "who was crucified for us" between "Immortal" and "have mercy" was made in the same Antiochene areas. The implied emphasis was[6] that He who died on the Cross was the incarnate God. Ascribed to Peter the Fuller of Antioch, this hymn had gained currency among the opponents of the Council of Chalcedon. In the Syrian provinces the use or disuse of the addition was regarded as a point of departure between the two sides. Now, in Constantinople, taking advantage of imperial favour, the same test was applied to Patriarch Macedonius to see whether he would permit the singing of the hymn with the addition in the churches of the capital. But he refused to comply, and Severus had the Emperor ask him whether he would confess "that one of the Trinity who became incarnate and was made Man without change had been born of Mary, and that she who brought him forth was *Theotokos*".[7] On the plea that Macedonius refused to admit this affirmation, he was deposed. Timothy who succeeded him sanctioned the use of the addition, and this led to great confusion and even the revolt of Vitalian later sought to gain support from the Chalcedonian side by claiming to oppose it.

Severus returned to Palestine, without heeding to the request of the Emperor to continue in the capital. He had Philoxenos of Mabbog whom Peter the Fuller had raised to that see as an ally in faith and a dependable supporter. Patriarch Flavian of

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[5] The time when Severus published his *Philalethes*, as it is noted in my previous paper, needs to be corrected here.

[6] Severus' interpretation of the hymn is noted below.

[7] *Vie de Sévère* by John of Aphthunia, *Patrologia Orientalis*, Tome II, Fascicule 3, No. 8, 236.

the Syrian see was at heart an adherent of the Chalcedonian position, but he was willing to make concessions to keep the unity of the Church. The critics of Chaldedon, led by the Bishop of Mabbog, were not satisfied merely with such adjustments. Under his influence a synod was held at Sidon in 512 which could not bring the parties to unity. This gave Philoxenos an opportunity to move the monastic body in Syria, with whom he apparently had a great hold, and on the strength of imperial letters had another council held in Isauria and ejected Flavian from the see. The vacancy thus created was filled by raising Severus. Being consecrated in November of the year, Severus took charge of the see in the midst of a jubilant welcome accorded to him by the citizens who supported him.

As Patriarch of Antioch Severus had his permanent residence in that city till he withdrew from there in September 518, at the beginning of the reign of Emperor Justin I. During these years of his ministry, except for his consistent opposition to the Council of Chalcedon and Nestorianism on the one hand, and to Apollinarianism and Eutychianism on the other, which shows an air of intolerance, Severus worked as a great bishop serving the Church with real devotion. The sermons which he preached and the letters which he wrote contain a depth of biblical faith and personal Christian conviction. If the Church were not divided and he were not forced by circumstances relative to them to identify himself with one party, he would easily have been acclaimed by the whole Church like St. Athanasius of Alexandria and St. Basil of Caesarea.

Severus was a prolific writer. Originally composed in Greek, his literary productions have a great deal of them been rendered into Syriac, and many of these translations have come down to us. Besides his homilies, doctrinal letters and hymns, he has three major works to his credit. They are: the *Philalethes* which has been already noted, the *Contra Impium Grammaticum*, and *La Polémique antijulianiste*. The central emphasis of the first, as already noted, is that the Council of Chalcedon cannot legitimately claim continuity with the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria. Severus has indeed a point here, which is noted a little later. *Contra Grammaticum* is a larger book in three parts which systematically works out an interpretation of Christ's person, facing the challenge offered him by John who at that time was a teacher of grammar and rhetoric and who later was made Bishop of Caesarea. This John had offered an interpretation in defence of Chalcedon's "in two natures". Taking the term «nature» in the sense of *ousia* he maintained that Christ was the Person of God the Word existing in the two natures of Godhead and manhood. Severus criticized this position as implying an incarnation of the Holy Trinity in the entire human race.

We can observe here two positions emerging. John the Grammarian, for example, expounded the manhood of Christ as *ousia* and affirmed the human reality of Christ without any reduction. Did he proceed from here to maintain that the manhood was only an abstract reality including in itself the entire human race, as Severus seems to take him to mean? The answer may be «no». In all probability he took the manhood in the sense of Aristotle's secondary *ousia* and laid the foundation for the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία) worked out by Leontius of Byzantium and adopted by John of Damascus. Severus, on his part, is clear that the manhood was full and perfect without any reduction, and also that it was individuated so as to affirm that Christ as man was a *man*. Between the two men, the issue was not the reality or the reverse of the manhood in the one Christ, but the question of the way in which the manhood was to be understood and interpreted. The fact therefore is that neither side was able to identify the real issue on which they clashed with the other.

The third major work of Severus consists in his writings aimed at refuting Julian of Halicarnassus, a senior bishop who, like Severus himself, had withdrawn from his see at the beginning of Justin's reign, Julian was opposed to the Council of Chalcedon. He was also concerned to affirm the full and perfect manhood of Christ.

But like many in his day, as also since then to our own time, he was keen to affirm a difference between Christ's manhood and our manhood, on the ground that it was united with God the Son. This indeed was a clear emphasis of Eutyches,[8] and we can observe it in the Christological teaching of most recognized theologians of both sides. Though some of them would be satisfied here with the insistence on Christ's sinlessness, there were others who would go on to affirm his divinisation and fullness of knowledge. Julian, on his part, took up this issue and developed it in agreement with the thinking of the times. The position he worked out was that the manhood which the all-holy God united to Himself in the incarnation for the salvation of mankind, though it is our manhood, was also different, in the sense that it had no contact with the fall of our manhood. Christ's manhood was holy in order to be the manhood of the holy God. Accordingly Julian insisted that the manhood of Christ was the manhood of Adam before the fall. The Virgin birth of our Lord was for Julian the means whereby God accomplished this. Christ's manhood was thus our manhood in perfection and reality, but it was the pure and essential manhood which God had created in Adam in the beginning.

Had Julian stopped here, many in the East on both sides in those times would perhaps have expressed sympathy, if not full agreement, with his views. For the East in general would draw no radical dichotomy between Adam before and after the fall, as implied in the teaching of Augustine. Julian, however, may well have taken his clue from the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans 5:12 and proceeded to insist that the manhood of Adam before the fall was not subject to suffering and death, and that Christ also, being united to this manhood, was, as man, free from these limitations. However, as He had come to save man who by nature is subject to suffering and death, Christ suffered and died in reality as a voluntary act of self-identification with men and women. Therefore, in Himself Christ as man was not passible and mortal from the moment of His conception in the Virgin's womb, but He took upon Himself in reality suffering and death for the sake of others. Thus, while being rich even in His humanity, Christ made Himself poor, and suffered and died on behalf of the human race.

It is this teaching of Julian that Severus sought to refute in his anti-Julianist works. Considering the distinction between essential manhood and historical manhood to be of little significance, Severus showed that the Virgin birth did not imply the idea Julian saw in it, but that it pointed to the new birth awaiting us in the *eschaton* which was symbolized in Baptism. Christ as man, he maintained, was from the moment of His conception in the Virgin's womb subject to growth, blameless passions of hunger and thirst, physical fatigue and mental agony, and so on, including death, with the single exception of sin, which of course was not to be considered part of essential manhood. All these experiences were, in Severus' teaching, indispensable for our salvation, and Christ Himself in His humanity, belonging as He did to our race, stood in need of them. Thus God the Son, while being eternally and inseparably united with the Father and the Holy Spirit, raised in principle the entire human race to an abiding communion with Himself and through Him with the blessed Trinity, by means of the *hypostatic* union which He established with a member of the human race. In fact, it is preeminently in his anti-Julianist works that Severus expressed his teaching on Christ's human reality excluding every vestige of Apollinarianism and Eutychianism most clearly. Already in his other writings especially in his homilies,[9] he had shown the direction of

[8] During his trial by the Home Synod of Constantinople in 448 Eutyches said that till then he had not affirmed Christ's consubstiality with us because he considered Him God. See *Acta Consiliorum Oecumenicorum*, II, i, 142: para 522.

[9] Homily 67 deals with this question.

his thinking, but now the challenge of Julian's views led him to clarify his ideas much further.

*Certain Historical Developments Affecting Severus*

Emperor Anastasius died in the night of 8-9 July 518, and the next day Justin I was made his successor. Since the new Monarch ordered the restoration of the Council of Chalcedon, about fifty-five bishops had to leave their sees within the Syrian provinces. One of them was indeed Severus.

In Constantinople Patriarch John was a sympathizer of the position of Severus. But he was made to change his doctrinal view soon after Justin assumed power. The Home Synod of Constantinople presented to him a petition against Severus on 15th July 518, and the Empress insisted that unless he acknowledged the Council of Chalcedon along with the three previous ones she would not take communion from him. These various circumstances led him to accept the Council. Antioch, as we have noted, was divided, and the ecclesiastical policy of the new Emperor was taken advantage of by the clergy and monks opposed to Severus to present a petition against the Antiochene Patriarch to the Patriarch of Constantinople and to the Home Synod, and the Synod passed a resolution deposing Sevevus. A little later Epiphanius of Tyre and the bishops with him sent their indictment of Severus in a letter addressed to Theophilus, Basiliscus, Marcian and to the whole Home Synod on 16th September 518. About two weeks after this letter was despatched, Severus left the city; never to come back there. But till his death on 8th February 538 he tried to keep in touch with his flock through correspondence and personal visits of his confidants.

Meanwhile Paul nicknamed the Jew was raised to the see of Antioch to replace Severus. However, even after his leaving the city, the latter was looked upon as their rightful Patriarch by the party opposed to the Council. Since the cruelties perpetrated by Paulon supporters of Severus were detested even by Justin, and possibly also on the ground that he supported Nestorius he was deposed, and Euphasius was made to succeed him. When he died in earthquake in 526, an army officer in the service of the Empire, Count Ephraim, was made Patriarch in his place. During the eighteen years of his episcopate Ephraim gave no respite to the opponents of the Council of Chalcedon.

The persecuting programme of Justin I did not succeed in bringing about a settlement of the religious issue. The opponents of the Council of Chalcedon in Egypt and particularly in the Orient could be weakened economically and even socially, but the masses in many areas including Constantinople followed them. Justinian who had been behind Justins' religious policies and who succeeded him in 527 came to realize the gravity of this situation, and from 531 he had a series of meetings arranged between leading men of both sides to discuss the question of union. In adopting this course of action Justinian's plan was to keep the Council of Chalcedon inviolate, but to have it so interpreted as to make it possible for its critics to endorse it at least as a matter of discipline. Though the Emperor was keen to have Severus participate in these discussions, he declined the invitation, and the first series did not bear the fruit expected of them. Later, from 535 another round of meetings were held with Severus as one of the participants. These conferences came to an end in early 536, following which a council which met in May-June of that year condemned Severus, and a little later another council held in Antioch under the leadership of Ephraim also passed a similar resolution against him.

Emperor Justinian who was the key figure in these developments during the thirties of the sixth century was indeed a remarkable man who combined interests and ambitions which a person of a more realistic frame of mind would hardly dare to put together. He was keen to have the vast areas of the Empire of Constantine the Great

brought back to his direct control. With this aim in mind, he had sent the General Belisarius to the West in 533 in order to reconquer Italy and other Western provinces as well as North Africa from the Goths and the Vandals who had held them under their sway. For the achievement of this goal Justinian needed the wholehearted support of the Roman papacy. Since Rome adhered to the Council of Chalcedon uncompromisingly, Justinian had to adopt a religious policy which would be satisfying to the Western see. Besides, in a divided state of the Church, so long as the idea of more than one ecclesiastical community existing in the Empire was not acceptable to either side, the Emperor had to make a choice, and this he did by favouring the Chalcedonian body. But he hoped that by personal dialogue with its leaders he would succeed in bringing the anti-Chalcedonian body to accept the Council at least as a symbol of their rejection of Eutychianism. In this hope the Emperor failed, and he had now only one option left and that was to issue a Constitution outlawing the movement against Chalcedon. Justinian did this in 536, following the council which condemned Severus.

Justinian's wife, Empress Theodora, held to a point of view different from that of her husband. She also recognized that a settlement of the religious issue was possible to be achieved only by coming to terms with the critics of Chalcedon. However, unlike her husband, she was prepared to abandon the Council and achieve this goal, and she supported its critics with the unswerving conviction of an adherent. In joining hands with the Emperor for the holding of meetings of leaders of both sides from 531, or possibly in suggesting the very idea to him, her plan may well have been to persuade the Emperor and the leading men of the Chalcedonian side to give up the Council for the sake of unity. She herself had pressed Severus by letters and other means to come to Constantinople for the dialogue. After much hesitation and on account of consistent pressure from the Empress and others of his friends and confidants, he was persuaded in the end to comply and he arrived in Constantinople late in 534, accompanied by Peter of Apamea and a large body of monks. He was well received by the imperial couple, and he stayed there till March 536 when he withdrew again to Egypt.

Patriarch Anthimus of Constantinople expressed his agreement with Severus, in spite of the fact that he was one of the men on the Chalcedonian delegation in the dialogue held in 532. The two patriarchs could thus form an alliance between them. About this time Timothy of Alexandria died, and his successor Theodosius was a learned man who also expressed his agreement with Severus and Anthimus. Soon after his elevation to the see, Theodosius had to face opposition from Gaianus, an adherent of the Julianist teaching, and go into hiding for personal safety for some time. Justinian helped him to regain the see, hoping that the Patriarch would respond to the Emperor's goodwill by joining the Chalcedonian side, but this did not happen. The monarch now expelled him from Alexandria, and he came to Constantinople and lived there under the protection of the Empress.

Although Theodosius may not have come to Constantinople before Severus left the city in March 536, the three men could express agreement in faith and form a powerful opposition to the Council while he was there, and even Justinian gave the impression of favouring them by dropping his support of the Council. This situation could not be allowed to continue unopposed by the Chalcedonian side. The monks of Jerusalem and Syria who favoured the Council sent deputations to the capital to voice their protest. Ephraim of Antioch, feeling his position threatened, sent a certain Sergius, a physician and layman of diplomatic talents, to Rome to inform the Pope of these developments in the capital and to seek his assistance in changing them.

Rome was at that time a city in the Gothic kingdom ruled by Theodahad. Although he was a man who had recognized the Emperor in Constantinople as his

nominal overlord, Justinian had planned to annex the Gothic kingdom to his Empire, and Belisarius had started his campaigns in the West in full swing. Realizing the consequences of these operations, the Gothic king prevailed upon Pope Agapetus to go to Constantinople on a peace mission and to appeal that the military actions initiated by Belisarius in Sicily and Dalmatia be suspended. A coincidence of the political and the religious issues led Agapetus to make a trip to Constantinople and he arrived there in March 536.

The coming of the Pope changed the scene in Constantinople. Justinian did not only receive Agapetus in great pomp, but ceased to have anything to do with Severus and Anthimus any longer. Seeing the change in the Emperor, the latter threw off his pallium before the monarch and withdrew from the see, though not from the city. Protected by the Empress, he did in fact live there so long as she was alive. Severus on his part asked the Emperor's leave and went back to his place of hiding in Egypt, as he had come to the capital on written promises of safe conduct, and he died there in less than two years. Menas was appointed to succeed Anthimus, being consecrated by Agapetus himself. The Pope, however, met with a sudden death, and the success which he achieved had to be crowned by the holding of a council without him. Attended by five Western bishops and forty-five bishops from the East, this Council which met in May-June 536 condemned Severus and Anthimus, and Justinian confirmed the decision by issuing his Constitution.

As for this council, it should be remembered that it could at best be only a Home Synod of Constantinople with a few Western bishops, which had no jurisdiction over a Patriarch of Antioch, and Justinian's Constitution could not claim to validity from an ecclesiastical reckoning. Ephraim of Antioch also convened a council with a hundred and thirty-two bishops participating and ratified the condemnation. Ecclesiastically the decision of the Antiochene council of Ephraim may be considered more binding on Severus than that of Constantinople. The fact, however, is that neither council did succeed in solving the religious problem which the opponents of Chalcedon raised. They only hardened the minds of people on both sides and led them to separate from each other. Already the anti-Chalcedonian party had begun the creation of its own hierarchy and been preparing itself for this eventuality even in the days of Severus. After his time, the separation materialized, and there came into being two mutually excluding Church bodies. Of these two, the one that rejected the Council of Chalcedon claimed to be continuous with the three ecumenical councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, and Ephesus, and rejected the Council of Chalcedon, on the plea that it introduced an innovation impermisible on the foundation of the earlier Councils. Whether this structure against the Council of Chalcedon be regarded as cogent or not, the fact remains that from 536 two Church traditions came into being in the Roman Empire, and Severus may be considered the leading theologian of the anti-Chalcedonian body at the time when the division actually took shape.

### *Charges Against Severus*

In condemning Severus the Synod of 536 seems to have taken in evidence the three petitions of 518 and two others of 536. One of these latter was addressed to Agapetus by the Home Synod of Constantinople and another presented to the Home Synod by the monks of Jerusalem, Syria II, Mount Sinai, and Palestine III. The substantial charges noted in these documents are:

1. That he accepted consecration as the incumbent of the see of Antioch uncanonically;

2. That he criticized the Council of Chalcedon and the *Tome of Leo;* and

3. That he was a heretic in the line of the Manichaeans, the Eutychians and the *Acephali.*

In addition to these major charges mentioned in these documents, there is a reference to Severus in the documents related to the Council of 680-681. There, in condemning men who had maintained the doctrine of one will and one operation in Christ, they are described as following the heresy "similar to the mad and wicked doctrine of the impious Apollinarius, Severus and Themistius". Putting all these ideas together, we can see that there were charges of heresy and violation of Church discipline against Severus.

These charges do, in fact, constitute the only points against Severus which the Chalcedonian side is entitled to raise against him legitimately from an official point of view. They refer to issues which call for clarification by both the Eastern and the Oriental Orthodox traditions in regard to Severus. His importance can be viewed either in his capacity as an individual theologian to see what he had taught and the value of his teaching, or as one standing in an ecclesiastical tradition both in his day and later. Of these two possibilities, the latter alone should concern us. The Church tradition which owns Severus as one of its leading theologians has existed all through the centuries in vigorous communities over against the Eastern Orthodox Church tradition. The latter, in collaboration with the Roman Catholic Church, has condemned Severus and others on these grounds, and this action is considered applicable to the former. In our effort to bring these Churches back to unity, we should concentrate on these charges. What we mean is that on both sides there were theologians since the time of the split in 536, who have expounded the faith in conformity with their respective traditions. Though a comparison of any one of them recognized by the Eastern Orthodox tradition with Severus will be of value from an academic theological point of view, that cannot be entertained as a fruitful way to work for the reunification of the Churches. For we cannot legitimately expect to see in Severus who died in 538 all the emphases in the same way as we find in a Maximus who lived in the seventh century or in a John of Damascus who died in the first quarter of the ninth. In my previous paper, while noting that there is *essential* agreement in theology between Severus and the Damascene, I have also noted at least one clear difference between them and another possible emphasis on which there is disagreement. The essential affinity which exists between them, as also between the two Church traditions, can be discerned only if we go beyond the terminology that divides them as well as the legitimate differences in interpretation which two theologians or even Church traditions can adopt on account of their varying social and intellectual backgrounds. If this possibility is admitted, the question to be raised would be: Does the difference between the two traditions amount to dividing Christ into two entities externally united in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, or to an affirmation of the loss of Christ's human reality in that of the Oriental Orthodox Church tradition? In fact, both sides have answered this question in the affirmative with reference to each other and have thus been guilty of seeing only mutually excluding emphases in them. Is this reading permissible? Do we have evidence to support the allegation that Severus followed the heretics in condemning the Council of Chalcedon? Can the Church tradition which owns him be accused of heretical leanings because it has not accepted the Council of Chalcedon?

## *Charges of Heresy*

In the various documents noted above Severus is denounced as a follower at once of Mani, Apollinarius and Eutyches. The highly polemical character of these documents is very obvious. The real point made by these denunciations is that the rejection of the Council of Chalcedon by Severus was the result of his adherence to a Christology which explained away the human reality of Christ. It is, in fact, insisted that in his early days Severus had led a pagan life, so despicable in its cults and other

abominable practices that when he decided to receive Baptism he was attracted to the heresy of the Eutychians and led to join the *Acephali* through Peter the Iberian. Thus, instead of coming to the Church, he came to associate himself with heresy as a result of his evil life in the past.

It is not possible to undertake a detailed examination of these allegations in a paper like this. We shall attempt here only to offer a few comments. The story that in his early days he had followed the pagan cults and the worship of demons does not deserve any attention. The truth of the matter, as we have already shown, is that following the custom of his day his Baptism was postponed till he himself chose to receive it in his late twenties or early thirties, and that like Basil of Caesarea or Gregory Nazianzen he had studied Greek classics as part of his early education in the context of the student life of those times.

Peter the Iberian was prince Nabarnugins of Iberia who had been given as a hostage to Emperor Theodosius II, while he was still a small boy. He was brought up in the palace, where he endeared himself to all, and was later made an officer in the State's cavalry. But he gave this up and retired into a monastic life in Palestine. As the dominant theology of the times, the Cyrilline position was adopted by him and, following the Council of Chalcedon, he joined Theodosius of Jerusalem in opposition to Juvenal and was consecrated bishop of Maiuma. When Emperor Marcian ordered that all those who led the movement against the Council in Palestine be arrested, Peter was left free. Without waiting to take advantage of this clemency, Peter left Palestine and retired into Egypt.

Was Peter the Iberian an *Acephalist?* Were the *Acephalists* Eutychians? These are questions of some importance in view of the charge against Severus connecting him with them. We have evidence that Theodosius of Jerusalem who opposed Juvenal soon after the Council of Chalcedon that he had excluded Eutychianism, so that his rejection of the Council was not the result of his adherence to the heresy ascribed to Eutyches. Peter the Iberian, whose influence led Severus to the anti-Chalcedonian camp and who associated himsef with Theodosius, cannot be accused of the Eutychian heresy. The linking of him with the *Acephalist* movement implies a similarly vague denunciation. There is evidence that in the eighties of the fifth century Peter had tried to reconcile Patriarch Peter Mongus of Alexandria with the *Acephalists*. The issue between them was not Eutychianism. Peter Mangus had signed the *Henotikon* of Emperor Zeno and entered into communion with Acacius of Constantinople who also had signed the document. Zeno had planned to bring about a settlement of the religious issue by making both sides accept the *Henotikon*, while each side clung to its point of view. Peter Mongus adopted this course of action, but a body of monks and a few bishops saw in this step taken by their Patriarch a betrayal of the anti-Chalcedonian cause. From their point of view, the division in the Church had been the result of the Council of Chalcedon, so that no compromise formula which did not tackle the question of the Council itself could be adequeate to restore the parties to unity. Since Peter Mongus had not conserved the anti-Chalcedonian point of view here in entering into communion with Acacius, the monks refused to have communion with their Patriarch. But they did not resort to appointing another patriarch to lead their movement and continued separated from the communion of Peter Mongus. On this ground they came to be called the *Acephali*, those without a head.

Peter the Iberian was not a member of the *Acephali* movement, neither was Severus, except that they deplored the imprudent action of Peter Mongus. Peter the Iberian, on his part, tried to bring about a settlement of the issue with a view to avoiding a split in his section of the Church. He saw that the demand of the monks was that for unity. Acacius or anybody else of the Chalcedonian side should categorically condemn the Council of Chalcedon. Since, however, Acacius who occupied

a stronger position than Peter Mongus could not be expected to come down on this point, Peter the Iberian suggested a compromise whereby to have Peter Mongus condemn the Council openly. Although this helped many of the monks to be reconciled to Peter Mangus, the *Acephalist* movement continued as a sect till about the seventh century. But by the time Severus came on the scene, it had begun to wane. To connect Severus with the *Acephalists* is only to discredit him. In fact, he was willing to grant that an acceptance of the *Henotikon* did, in itself, imply a rejection of the Council of Chalcedon, a position which the *Acephalists* would never admit.

A close study of these allegations will show that they were not based on fact, but that they constituted an attempt to denounce a person who had systematically and consistently opposed the Council of Chalcedon. The real question that should engage our attention is therefore the basis on which Severus adopted this stand. Keeping the question in mind, we shall look briefly into his standpoint *vis-à-vis* the three heretical positions ascribed to him.

*Severus and Manicheism*

Severus opposes Manicheism chiefly on three grounds. In the first place, he rejects Manichaean dualism. In homily 123 of his Cathedral Homilies, he discusses the point in the context of an exposition of the Trinitarian doctrine. The Holy Trinity, he says, is one *arche*, namely one First Principle. But the Manichaeans postulate two first principles. Severus maintains that our faith "in the all-sovereign Father and in the Only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is consubstantial with the Father, does not negate the truth concerning the unity of the First Principle, because the Son does not constitute a Second Principle". The Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally derived from the Father. Born of the Father, the Son is the "effulgence of the Father's glory and the stamp of His person". As the effulgence, He is not separated from the Father whom He reflects. The Manichaean theory of two First Principles cannot be admitted because it involves a contradiction. In homily 42 Severus says:

> One Godhead and ousia in three unconfused persons, one First Principle and not three. For from the Father, though not after Him, are the Son and the Holy Spirit (…) When I speak of the Trinity, I mean the Father, the Son who, without change or transformation, became incarnate for us in the last days, and the Holy Spirit.

Thus, while maintaining the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, Severus excludes the dualism of the Manichaeans.

Secondly, Severus repudiates the Manichaean idea that the material reality including the human body was evil. "If our flesh is in itself impure", says Severus, "He who made all things very good would not have made it in the beginning. If the creation is clean and if it has not brought any discredit on Him who formed it, how much purer would be that creature whom He made superior to everything else?" God's creation is good, and man is more so than all other things.

Thirdly, in accusing Severus of being a follower of Manicheism the real point is that he does not safeguard the humanity of Christ properly. As we shall see, Severus denies this insinuation. In his view, the Son who is consubstantial with the Father, while remaining what He is, became consubstiantal with us. After completing His dispensation and following His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ ascended into heaven embodied, at the same time as God filling all things without being in a body. "He humbled Himself unto death", says Severus in Homily 123, "the death through the cross. He did not undergo any reduction in the glory that pertains to Him, but by those very sufferings and humiliation in the flesh which He voluntarily accepted on our

behalf He manifested strength and victory over suffering, and through those very experiences He scored the victory".

The rejection of the Council of Chalcedon by Severus was not the result of his adherence to Manicheism.

*Severus and Apollinarianism*

Following the Johannine statement that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" and the teaching of the Alexandrine Fathers, Severus refers to Christ's manhood quite frequently as "flesh". But he makes it clear that for him the word means "complete manhood", and almost always he adds the words "endowed with a rational and intelligent soul", or with the human *nous* which Apollinarius is believed to have denied. Thus, on the face of it, Severus excludes Apollinarianism.

The position of Severus can be illustrated by noting many passages in his writings. For our purpose here we may refer to two of his homilies briefly. In Homily 42 he says that when God the Son became man for our salvation, He was composed of Godhead and manhood, each in perfection according to its own principle. He was one, not by letting His Godhead change from being simple, but because, while remaining fixedly what He was, He accepted a union with the flesh. He became man, not in appearance, but in reality. Unless God the Word, insists Severus, had taken our flesh, Mary had no place in the dispensation. In the same way, there would have been no need for either her conceiving or completing the days of child-birth. The birth itself would have been a sort of dream, the reference to the swaddling cloths, His growth in stature, hunger, fatigue, scourges, and the Cross would all have been imaginary and His words after the Resurrection, "touch me and see, for a spirit has no flesh and bones (...)" could have no meaning. Through Mary, affirms Severus, Jesus Christ received without any reduction, sin or passion, all the things that mothers pass on to the children they bear from their own being. As regards Christ's suffering, Severus is clear that He died because He had a real participation in our nature. Since He is God without a body and unapproached by suffering, had He not become incarnate and been made man, He would not have suffered at all.

In homily 58 Severus refutes Apollinarius and Eutyches, arguing that their position would lead only to seeing Christ's life on earth as a mere appearance. It was not enough, he maintains, that Christ came in the guise of a man; it was necessary that He should have identified Himself with us, His brethren, in all that pertains to us, whereby to do away with the power of sin from everywhere. For this purpose He became incarnate from the Virgin who had descended from Adam, Abraham and David, and freed us from sin. He became incarnate by uniting to Himself flesh endowed with soul and mind.

All this should be clear. The question, however, remains whether in the teaching of Severus there is a real place for the human soul of Christ. This has special force in the light of Henry Chadwick's view that Cyril's theology does not need a human soul.[10] He admits the fact that Cyril acknowledges in words the presence of a human soul in Christ, but in interpreting the Person of Christ the Alexandrine theologian does not show any role which it played in Christ. In all his writings, Chadwick notes, there is only one place where the Alexandrine so much as glances at the psychological problem, and there he considers the impassibility of the Logos in the light of the body-soul analogy. This, Chadwick thinks, is not really better than the Antiochene *sunapheia*. Chadwick refers to a passage in Nestorius' letter to Alexander of

[10] See article on "Eucharist and Christology," *Journal of Theological Studies*, N. S., Vol. II, pt. 2, October (1951)

Hierapolis quoted by Severus, where the Antiochene theologian draws a distinction between the union of body and soul in man in which each of them suffers with the other, and of the Emperor and his statue in which the insult administered to the statue cannot be said to affect the Emperor necessarily but only voluntarily. The suffering of the Logos in Christ must be of the latter kind.

Whether Cyril would leave the question of Christ's human soul in a state of uncertainty of this kind or not cannot be undertaken here. Our concern in the present context is with Severus. As one who claims to stand in the Cyrilline tradition, would Severus stop his theological enquiry at this point and go no further? The fact, as Chadwick rightly points out, is that the Alexandrines accused the Antiochenes of dividing Christ, and the latter challenged the former as contradicting the principle of divine *apatheia* (ἀπάθεια). It should be acknowledged that on this specific point the interpretation offered by each side in its own defence is exremely subtle verging on being unclear. This ambiguity is indeed greater with reference to the Alexandrine position than to the Antiochene. In Severus one can find in very clear terms an insistence on the one hand on divine impassibility, and on the other the reality of Christ's sufferings in body and mind as well as of all other human experiences including the death, the cross, as also on the emphasis that His suffering and death were the means whereby the human race has been saved. Therefore the question to be asked is not whether Severus acknowledges these affirmations but how he interprets them while clinging to his uncompromising insistence on the "one incarnate nature of God the Word".

The central point of Chaldwick's observation deserves commendation. The issue for any Christological position of ancient times to tackle has reference to Christ's personal unity on the one hand, and His human reality on the other. However, the fact should be noted that we do not think that the Antiochene *sunapheia* (συνάφεια) by itself offers a solution to the problem adequately. Neither does the theology of the *Tome of Leo* nor the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία) give it. Taking the large number of passages from his writings, one can say that Severus has conserved a position facing these issues which deserves as much consideration as any of the other three positions. The *Tome of Leo*, for instance, states the double be reality of Christ as *one Person* existing *in two natures*, and the Council of Chalcedon adopted it. Here the question as to *who* the person is, and *what* the natures are, is indeed most crucial. The *Tome* itself gives the clue to an answer in the emphasis that "each nature performs what is proper to itself in communion with the other; the Word, for instance, performing what is proper to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what is proper to the flesh". A nature that performs what is proper to itself cannot be anything other than a person, and the *Tome* would agree well with the Antiochene *sunapheia*, which sees the unity of Christ in the realm of *prosopon*. Although this view can affirm Christ's human psychology well enough, its exposition of Christ's unity is far from clear.[11]

In the sixth century Chalcedonian East tried to improve on this by the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία). By taking the term *nature* in the sense of Aristotle's secondary *ousia*, or as an abstract reality, this theory had no difficulty in maintaining the one Person of Christ to be the eternal Person of God the Son, and the two natures to be Godhead and manhood. Since an abstract reality cannot exist by itself unless it subsists in a concrete person or substance, it could be insisted that in the incarnation God the Son who had Godhead as His eternal nature united to

[11] The fact that Leo may have removed this difficulty in his other writings does not answer the problem of the *Tome*, or justify the action of the West in insisting on it in spite of the very real problem it created in the East.

Himself manhood as a second nature and offered it His own Person. This view can affirm Christ's unity adequately, without ignoring the two natures.

The theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία) which is noted here in brief words has to answer at least three questions. Firstly, in uniting manhood to Himself, did God the Word assume it as an abstract reality only, without its own hypstatic or personal status? If the manhood of Christ is without its own personal principle, does *it* play any function in the incarnation? In other words, does the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία) guarantee anything more than the mere presence of the human reality in Christ? Secondly, if it is the Person of God the Word that in fact activates both the divine and the human natures, does the theory exclude the criticism that the Alexandrine theologians do not take seriously the principle of divine impassibility? Thirdly, since as nature manhood is incapable of existing by itself without its own person, does its subsistence in the Person of God the Word, who is in Himself invisible and beyond all limitations of the space-time world, make Jesus Christ a concrete reality in this world? Or, if Jesus Christ is really what the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία) makes Him out to be, could He have lived in this world at all?

Keeping in mind these possible criticisms of the *Tome of Leo* and the theory of *enhypostasia* (ἐνυποστασία), we shall look briefly into the teaching of Severus. Like the Antiochenes, he also holds to the emphasis on divine impassibility. However, he recognizes the possibility of incarnation by the impassible God. In His own being, insists Severus, God is beyond all limitations. Thus speaking on the Ascension of our Lord in Homily 47, he refers to Ephesians 4:10 and comments:

> How can He who is everywhere present descend? Or, where would He who fills all things ascend? Unless He be in a body, nowhere. Where would He who is not limited or bounded go or move? For He is not confined in any place. He draws the limit for all things, and everything is bounded by Him.

Incarnation is possible because of three things. In the first place, because God is ultimately love. It is as an expression of His infinite love that God created man. After his fall, though death reigned over mankind including even those who lived righteous lives, the same love continued to be shown by God. Thus He prepared the race for the Incarnation, and in the end God the Son took upon Himself the nature of man through the *hypostatic* union with one member of the human race, and worked out the salvation of every human being as well as of the race as a whole in principle. The salvation consists ultimately in the human response to the divine love. If we take this emphasis of Severus seriously, we shall see that the analogy of the Emperor and his statue which Chadwick refers to Nestorius does not apply in the case of the divine-human unity in Christ. Made of lifeless matter which does not respond to love, a statue cannot be compared to a man who is a living person capable of turning to his Creator, seeking and responding to the divine love. This being the Christian's hope, to say that God's love for man is merely like the love which an Emperor has for his statue is, to say the least, opposed to the Christian truth.

Secondly, man is made in the image of God. The eternal and uncreated image of God the Father is indeed God the Son, and He is the effulgence of the Father's glory. Man is God's created image, so that in his essential being man can reflect God on the one hand and be the Creator's vicegerent on earth on the other. Therefore it is possible for God the Son to become incarnate and be made man, and in the incarnation to participate in some way in the life and experience of man. On this ground also the analogy of the Emperor and the statue breaks down.

Thirdly, God the Son became incarnate by accepting on Himself a voluntary self-limitation. This applies only to His incarnate life, and does not affect His divine status in the Holy Trinity or His controlling operation in the universe. In other words, God

the Son who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, transcends the limitations of the space-time world united to Himself *hypostatically* manhood by limiting Himself to be with the manhood according to its own various conditions at every stage and to the social and other settings of life in this world. He let the manhood express its creaturely freedom, human experiences of joy and sorrow, physical and mental health and pain, and everything else essentially human, with the single exception of sin. In homily 46 Severus notes:

> When He became incarnate, He came to the various stages appropriate to the manhood and associated them all to Himself, except sin. So He was conceived and was born, and He owned the swaddling cloths, the stature of a child, the need to be fed and to grow.

As I have shown in my previous paper, for Severus, the manhood with its own soul and mind came into being only in a hypostatic union with God the Son, so that at every moment in the life of Jesus Christ the manhood had God the Son united with it indivisibly and inseparably. The manhood was still manhood, and it had all essential human faculties and properties without any reduction whatsoever, and God the Son was the same God the Son, one of the Holy Trinity, without either of them becoming confused with, or changing over into, the other. But there was an exchange of properties, because of which everything human could be attributed to God the Son. "The same is perfect God and perfect man", says Severus in Homily 59. "He speaks divinely and humanly. As becoming God, He works miracles and accepts suffering in the dispensation". If, on the other hand, the manhood had come into being on its own apart from union with God the Son, and then they were united, the man would act by himself and God the Son by Himself, each in communion with the other. But this emphasis would not be adequate to affirm the incarnation.

Severus is convinced that the personal unity of Christ can be safeguarded without contradicting the principle of divine impassibility far more sufficiently on the basis of the theological tradition which he expounds than the Antiochenes would ever be able to do by means of their emphasis on *sunapheia* (συνάφεια) or the principle of conjuction. In fact, he asks in Homily 59: "Shall we separate Him (God the Son) from the flesh, because some people clamour against us indecently that we hold to divine passibility?" The allegation of divine passibility was thus laughed at by Severus. He is clear that God is impassible and transcendent in His own being, but it is possible for Him to become incarnate and own the experiences of a human life without sin. It is this possibility that has been actualized in reality in Jesus Christ.

Before concluding this discussion, a word may be noted about Severus's point of view regarding the clause «who was crucified for us» which was added to the *Trisagion*, since that constituted an issue on which both sides fought during the first two decades of the sixth century. In Homily 125 he treats the subject at some length. Admitting the fact that the clause had been a new addition, Severus argues that this cannot be a valid point against its adoption. For there are many things in the Church which has come into use as new developments. Thus the Feast of Dedication which, though it had been celebrated in Jerusalem and Palestine, had not been observed in Constantinople except very lately, and Palm Sunday was not found in the calendar of the Church in many places but it had become a day of celebration everywhere. The hymn itself was not very old, and even after being composed it had not been sung in Alexandria. The question therefore about it is whether the addition is theologically sound. From this pont of view, Severus insists that the hymn as a whole was meant from the beginning as a praise addressed to God the Son, so that the addition was indeed very legitimate. Since God the Son had Godhead in Him in fulness and reality eternally, He is God. In saying "Holy God" we confess that He who became incarnate is holy; in saying "Holy the Strong" we acknowledge that even in His suffering, humiliation and death on the Cross, He is strong and holy; in saying "Holy

the Immortal" we affirm that, although He accepted suffering in a body which by nature was passible and mortal, in His own nature He is immortal and holy. These three ideas are then summed up in the words, "who was crucified for us", and the hymn ends in the petition "have mercy upon us". The hymn is thus Christological and its affirmation is the incarnation of God the Son. The principle of divine impassibility is by no means contradicted by its use beyond what an incarnational theology will permit.

*Severus and Eutychianism*

The charge of Eutychianism against Severus need not detain us long as it has been discussed already. It is very clear that he was not guilty of adopting an Eutychian standpoint as this had been traditionally understood. He had, in fact, condemned Eutyches in unmistakeable terms both for his refusal to confess the double consubstantiality of Christand for his statement referring to "two natures before" and "one nature after", which were the greatest errors seen in him by his critics.

There is, however, another issue related to the Eutychian question which calls for some comment. The accusation of Eusebius of Dorylaeum against Eutyches was that he did not affirm Christ's human birth in a real sense, so that in his view Christ's human body had come from heaven. Though Eutyches himself denied this charge as a baseless allegation and insisted time and again that Christ had derived his human body from the Virgin mother's womb and that He had a real human birth, this view was seen in him both by Leo of Rome and by Flavian of Constantinople. In fact, the basis of both these critics to ascribe these ideas to Eutyches lay in his hesitation on the question of the double consubstantiality. Whether in spite of his denial, Eutyches did in fact refuse to affirm our Lord's human birth or not, it is clear that Severus was never guilty of holding this view. His teaching, on the contrary, is that there was a real conception of the manhood by the Virgin mother, that the embryo was formed in her womb where it developed to the fullness of an infant over a period of nine months, and that she gave Him birth in due time with a full awareness of the delivery. The body of Christ which was thus born had, for Severus, been derived from the human mother, in the same way as the body of any human being, with the only exception that the male function required in the case of every other conception was fulfilled in this instance by the creative work of God accomplished by the Holy Spirit. As to the Virgin birth itself, although there are a few places in his homilies where Severus seems to see in it an assurance that the conception was totally devoid of any defilement implying that the physical union of husband and wife has something unworthy about it, in his more theological statements found elsewhere he shows clearly that marriage and the conjugal bed of the husband and wife are sacred, and that these cannot be regarded in any way as defiled or defiling. In the latter references Severus interprets the Virgin birth of our Lord as a guarantee of a new birth inaugurated for the human race in Jesus Christ. This has been realized in Him, but as for His human brethren it is signified in Baptism and will be attained by them in reality in the world to come. Severus offers here his theological interpretation of the mystery implied ithe Virgin birth of our Lord.

Aloys Grillmeier sees a dichotomy between Cyril of Alexandria and Eutyches in .regard to their affirmation of the phrase "from two natures".[12] Without going into the question whether this is justified or not, we should ask whether Severus could be accused of following Eutyches in the way Grillmeier understands him at this point. How Severus interprets this and other Alexandrine phrases which he adopts has been

[12] A. Grillmeier, with T. Hainthaler, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), Eng. trans., *Christ in Christian Tradition*, (London: Mowbray, 1995), 458.

discussed in my previous paper. I have shown there that Severus was opposed to the use of the simple phrase "one nature". In his view Christ was not simply "one nature" but "one incarnate nature of God the Word". In fact, he insists that the "one" should always have the "incarnate" also with it. For the "one nature" in regard to Christ is not *simple* but *composite*. John of Damascus admits the word "composite" with reference to *hypostasis* but not to nature or *physis*. He had no objection to the phrase "one composite hypostasis", but he was not in favour of "one composite nature". Severus, on the other hand, used both the phrases and saw in them the same meaning.

The point behind the emphasis of Severus may need a brief explanation. Like Chalcedonian scholars of his day, he admits that the word *nature* could be taken either in the sense of *ousia* or in that of *hypostasis*. But unlike them, he insists that in regard to the incarnation the word *nature* should mean only *hypostasis* in all the phrases. His reason is that it was God the Son, an eternal *hypostasis* (nature understood as *hypostasis)*, in whom the entire Godhead (nature as *ousia)* is individuated, that made the manhood (nature as *ousia)* in its fullness to be individuated (nature as *hypostasis)* in union with Himself.

In the sense of *ousia* nature is abstract, so that manhood as *ousia* cannot exist as a concrete reality without subsisting in a person. Thus the manhood has to be *hypostatic*, and that is what God the Son did with the manhood by individuating it. Severus seeks to avoid a division of Christ by the affirmation that the individuation happened only in the union. Christ who is formed in this way is at once perfect God and perfect man. He is one incarnate nature or *hypostasis* of God the Word, and as such "one composite hypostasis" which is the same as "one incarnate nature of God the Word". As God, He is God the Son; and as man, the same is *a man* representing the entire human race.

An examination of the teaching of Severus in comparison with the heretical positions alleged against him will show that they do not tally. This fact is enough basis to say that the ascription of heresy had behind it other motives.

## *The Issue of the Council of Chalcedon*

Severus, as we have noted, was uncompromising in his rejection of the Council of Chalcedon. The Council ratified, so it may have been assumed, the condemnation of Eutyches and affirmed Christ's human reality without ignoring His divinity in clear terms. In rejecting this Council, then, Severus must have defended Eutyches and renounced Christ's humanity. His insistence on the phrases "from two natures" and "one incarnate nature of God the Word" may have been taken as an added proof of his denial of the manhood of Christ. At a time when Christian communities in the East were divided over the issue of the Council of Chalcedon and people in general were passionately holding to their respective party loyalties, the adherents of neither party had the patience to study the teaching of men who belonged to the opposite camp, and at the same time each side was keen to declare its own superiority even by discrediting the other. The denunciation of Severus as a heretic sprang from this milieu. However, the fact that his rejection of the Council was not the result of any adherence to heresy had been the point which he made consistently and repeatedly. It is without paying due attention to this side of the story that the councils of the sixth and seventh centuries passed their resolutions condemning Severus and others. Furthermore, these Councils did never seek to establish a specific charge against any of them. None of these condemnations can therefore be considered legitimate or binding, and the issue needs to be re-examined.

This should not be difficult, for unlike many events in the history of the ancient Church, the Council of Chalcedon and the split in the Church resulting from it

can be studied more or less accurately, as we have a great deal of recorded materials connected with that subject at our disposal. These materials have in fact been studied, particularly by scholars of a pro-Chalcedonian persuasion, and the history of that period has been treated in a way which still remains one-sided. This defect of the present scholarship in the area stands in urgent need of correction. We believe that the documents relied on for offering any theory about the conflict by scholars are possible to be interpreted in a much more satisfactory way than has hitherto been done.

As I have shown in my previous paper, Severus criticized the Council of Chalcedon on the grounds of both doctrine and tradition. It is indeed clear that from his point of view the issue which led to the conflict was not the question of Eutyches. Two incidents at the Council of Chalcedon will in fact bear this out even with reference to Dioscorus. Thus at the very beginning of the Council, when Eusebius of Dorylaeum presented his petition accusing him of misconduct at the Council of 449, his answer in part was that the question of the faith should be clarified before anything else was taken up for deliberation.[13] His point obviously was that the decisions of the Council of 449 were based on a specific understanding of the faith, so that before declaring the Council to have erred or he be accused for its decisions the assembly should address itself to the really relevant issue. Was this understanding of the faith "Eutychianism"? It is a clear answer to this legitimate question that is found in Dioscorus' statement about Eutyches.[14] In other words, from the point of view of Dioscorus and others who rejected the Council of Chalcedon, the issue on which there was dispute in the Church which stood in need of solution was not the teaching of Eutyches, whatever that may have been.

The Council, on the other hand, moved from the beginning on the assumption that the real issue was Eutychianism and that it was a great danger to the faith. Though Dioscorus and his supporters would agree that Eutychianism was a danger, they were not prepared to grant that it was the real issue to be settled. Thus the Council of Chalcedon and its adherents from that time to our own, to state the fact humorously, have been striving hard to locate their ecclesiastical critics in a place where they could not be found, and by the time the Eastern Orthodox tradition began to realize that they had been all along groping in the dark to seize the black cat where it was not, the gulf had been widened and the minds of people had come to be irreparably estranged. The West, on its part, could do nothing but to see in the Eastern Churches which opposed the Council Eutychian heretics, who have in modern times been "aptly" described as "Monophysites".

If the real issue that caused the division was not Eutychianism, what else was it? The answer is not far to seek. The issue lay buried in the theological controversy between men of the Antiochene and the Alexandrine schools of theology. They clashed from the Christmas season of 428, and even broke off communion with each other for a time following the Council of Ephesus in 431 which had offered a decisive victory to the latter. However, by the reunion of 433 Cyril of Alexandria and John of Antioch signed an uneasy peace treaty which many extremists, particularly on the Antiochene side, refused to accept. The issue on which they contended now was the Council of Ephesus.

The fact about the reunion of 433 is that it did not succeed in offering an agreed answer to the question how the Council of Ephesus was to be accepted. For instance, in condemning Nestorius as a heretic this Council had adopted a theological standpoint based primarily on the two Cyrilline writings, the Second and the Third Letters to Nestorius, the latter with the Twelve Anathemas. Although the Antiochene

[13] ACO. II,i.67: para 21.

[14] Ibid. 92: para 168.

side was not unwilling to endorse the Second Letter, they were decidedly opposed to the Third Letter and the Anathemas. Faced with this fact, Cyril did not agree to cancel or ignore the Anathemas, neither did John admit the Cyrilline position. But both of them said that they accepted the Council. Here lay the snag. They did not endorse the Council in an greed sense, and neither side was willing to make any lasting concession for the sake of peace. On the contrary, each took the ·reunion as stone from which to teach the other side Orthodoxy in its a stepping pristine purity. In other words, the reunion did not unite the Church or even the concerned parties, but it put a cloak, as it were, around two intensely conflicting bodies and made them appear as one.

Cyril, the recognized leader and theologian par excellence of the Alexandrine side, believed that he had scored a great diplomatic victory over John in making him accept the Council of 431 along with his letters, though with some temporary reservation on the latter's part about the Anathemas which would wear off in a short time. John, on his part, was clear that he endorsed the Council, not in its entirety, but only without the Anathemas and insofar as the Formulary of Reunion would permit. While remaining within the cloak that covered them, Cyril told his partisans that John's account of the reunion was not correct, and John informed his men that Cyril's story was a distortion. Both men had in fact grounds to defend their respective positions. In terms of documents for ascertaining the faith, the Antiochenes approved the Creed of Nicaea, the Second Letter of Cyril to Nestorius, and the Formulary of Reunion of 433. The Alexandrines, on their part, would acknowledge the Creed of Nicaea, the Second Letter of Cyril to Nestorius, and the Third Letter to Nestorius with the Twelve Anathemas. To these they would add as a sort of concession the Formulary of Reunion. Each side went on strengthening itself and trying to make out that it was exclusively the Orthodox position in its full reality. Rome and the West apparently had no understanding of this Eastern conflict either in those ancient times or even later.

It is in the context of this rupture that the Home Synod of Constantinople decided to condemn Eutyches, an adherent of the Alexandrine standpoint, as a heretic in 448. Granting that he did not succeed in stating his position with the clarity of a trained theologian, the fact should be admitted that the Synod did not permit the monks' confession to be taken in evidence in his case. More seriously from the Alexandrine point of view, the Synod, in fixing the doctrinal standpoint for judging the monk, stood closely by the Antiochene interpretation of the Council of 431, to the complete neglect of the Alexandrine emphasis.[15] Thus the way in which the Synod disposed of the question of Eutyches in 448 would offend any convinced Alexandrine at that time. To be sure, Dioscorus and his associates did not have to be Eutychians or followers of any heresy whatsoever to react to this Antiochene assertion, and they expressed it with the same vehemence as Leo of Rome, Nestorius himself, Theodoret of Cyrus and other leading men of those ancient times would adopt in countering their opponents, at the second Council of Ephesus in 449. In its effort to nullify this Antiochene triumph, this Council exonerated Eutyches on the strength of his confession which was admittedly Orthodox. This action did not mean anything more than the defence of Marcellus of Ancyra a century earlier by Athanasius of Alexandria and Rome itself. In fact the Arian party had accused the great Athanasius of following the heresy of Marcellus in those times. The fact, however, is that like Athanasius who showed leniency towards a partisan, Dioscorus and his Council expressed a kind of sympathy towards an old monk on the Alexandrine side. They did this only on the ground of his

[15] See ACO II,i,104-111: paras 240 and 246. It should be remembered that the Synod noted the Creed of Nicaea, but not a word was said there about the Creed of Constantinople, and the Second Letter of Cyril to Nestorius as well as the Formulary of Reunion were read.

confession and later when they found that this action would lead to misunderstand their standpoint, they gave up the man unreservedly.

This indeed was the Eastern ecclesiastical setting in which the Council of Chalcedon was held. There existed a problem in the Church at that time, but that was not Eutychianism; it was rather the extreme tension between the Alexandrine and the Antiochene patrisans. As for "Eutychianism", it is a trend in Christian mystical devotion which needs checking all the time, even on the Chalcedonian side in spite of the Councils of 451 and 680-81. The Council of Chalcedon was so controlled by an alliance of Rome and the imperial authority in Constantinople with the support of men of the Antiochene side that the real issue which had practically rent the Church in the East into two camps was not even raised there; neither did the Council seek a solution for it. Dioscorus alone tried to raise it from the beginning, with no success, and on a later occasion Eustathius of Berytus implied it in his interventions[16] again in vain.

The division in the Church following the Council of Chalcedon was a continuation of the conflict that had come into being from 433. Men like Severus who followed the Alexandrine point of view could legitimately see that the Council of 451 did contradict the Council of Ephesus in 431 in a real sense. As we have shown elsewhere, the Council of Chalcedon did not endorse the Cyrilline Anathemas, of the voluminous writings of the great Alexandrine theologian it formally declared acceptable only his Second Letter to Nestorius and the Formulary of Reunion expressing the reunion between him and John of Antioch, implicitly excluded the phrase «one incarnate nature of God the Word», went beyond the provisions of the reunion in insisting on the phrase «in two natures», and exonerated Theodoret of Cyrus and Ibas of Edessa. The legitimacy of everyone of these points which can be raised against the Council had been acknowledged either implicitly or explicitly. The Council of Constantinople in 553, for example, declared not only that the Anathemas were acceptable, but that they had been so acknowledged even by the Council of Chalcedon. Cyril's place as a recognized Church Father and theologian has been admitted without any special qualification. At the Council of Chalcedon itself there was a serious exchange of words between two factions over the phrases "from two natures" and "in two natures", the vast majority of delegates pressing for the former; the latter was admitted in the end simply on the authority of the *Tome of Leo* which the Council members had been made to declare a document of the faith by various means. To be sure, at least a section of the delegates agreeed to subscribe to the *Tome* only as a concession to the bishop of Rome and on the assurance given them by the Roman legates that it agreed in emphasis with the Anathemas of Cyril. The Council of 553 considered the "one incarnate nature of God the Word" and the "from two natures" Orthodox if properly understood. This Council further condemned as heretical the anti-Cyrilline writings of Theodoret and Ibas, in spite of which they had been exonerated by the Council of 451.

All these facts clearly vindicate the position adopted by men like Dioscorus of Alexandria, Timothy Aeluruss, Philoxenos of Mabbog and Severus, and they show that the story of Chalcedon is far more complex and complicated than either side in the dispute has ever acknowledged. These men stand in the tradition of the Alexandrine fathers in loyalty to the Creed of Nicaea as it had been ratified by the Council of Constantinople in 381 and the Council of Ephesus in 431 in its entirety. To dismiss them as Apollinarian or Eutychian heretics, or to denounce them as men of violence any more than Leo of Rome, Nestorius, Theodoret and many others, is to reach he zenith of distorting truth.

[16] ACO II,i,112-3: paras 261-7.

On the foundation of the Alexandrine theological tradition, they could not find a way to accommodate the expressions "in two natures", "two wills" and "two operations", which in their view implied a division of the one Christ and would hardly affirm the incarnation. But while keeping to their premises, they have conserved a position regarding Christ's Person which would affirm His human reality in unmistakeable terms. The significance of Severus lies in expounding this Alexandrine tradition with clarity and comprehensiveness. He may not have answered all possible questions that can be raised about the Person of Christ. But, then, has anybody else succeeded in this great endeavour?

## The Reply of Catholicos Saint Nerses to the letter of Gir Manuel, the Great King of the Greeks, on the true profession of faith of the Armenian Church[1]

"The efforts towards unity (1165-1173) conducted by Catholicos Saint Nerses, the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Michael and Byzantine Emperor Manuel are of critical importance," as Catholicos Aram I wrote in his book. Catholicos Aram also writes (in *St. Nerses the Gracious and Church Unity* 51, note 2): "K. Sarkissian (future Catholicos) rightly considers the *Profession of Faith* and the *Definition of Faith* (of Nerses), "the clearest and the soundest of all the treatises on the doctrinal position of the Armenian Church."[2]

(...) Meanwhile, since the emissaries sent by your greatness asked us to give a short written statement about our profession of faith and send it to your holy Kingship, we prepared it. This is not based on our own thoughts but [on the teachings] of the holy divines of the church, of those before the division (of Chalcedon). Here is our profession of faith:

(...) At the consummation of times, one of the three persons, the Son, by the accord of the Father and the Spirit, was humbled to our nature for our salvation. And, the perfect Godhead assumed our perfect human nature, i.e. spirit, mind and flesh from the Holy Virgin Mary—and, being a new union[3] out of two inseparable natures of God and man united in one person—was born from the Virgin Mary as God incarnate. The Son of God became and was called the Son of man, without changing His divine nature and without altering His human substance. The ineffable union of Godhood and manhood remained unchangeable and without mutation of the natures, inseparable and indivisible, visible only to the eyes of the mind. For, the unity of the Creator's nature with that of the creature is far superior than the unity of the created beings with each other. The created beings are either separated from each other after the union or dissolved in one another through alteration, while the power of the Creator's nature, which is not subject to any weakness, was united inseparably with our nature. The Godhead did not undergo any decomposition or alteration, uniting to the humanity or the humanity uniting to the Godhead; the union remained unconfused and indivisible.[4]

Therefore, we neither divide into two natures and two persons the one Christ according to Nestorius nor assemble the divine and human natures into one nature by confusion and alteration, as did Eutyches and his followers. We do say two natures, following Gregory the Great Theologian, who in his letter to Cledonius, writing against Apollinarius and his followers, says that "the natures are two"; he then continues to explain the reason: "for Christ is God and man".[5] This is true. For, if He was only God or only man, then it would have been correct to say that He has one nature either divine or human. But since He is God and man, united by ineffable union and immutable, it is evident then that He had both divine and human natures, but united and inseparable

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[1] In Catholicos Aram I of Cilicia, *St. Nerses the Gracious and Church Unity* (Antelias, 2010), 185-191. See also "The first letter of Manuel, King of the Greeks to Lord Nerses, Catholicos of the Armenians on the search for union between the two nations" ibid., 180-181. The letter is dated 15 September 1167.

[2] Karekin Sarkissian, *A Brief Introduction to Armenian Christian Literature*, (London: Faith Press, 1960), 44

[3] The Armenian word is *xamumn*, meaning blending, mingling, joining. This key word in Armenian Christology describes the Logos' assuming human nature.

[4] Cf. Cyril of Alexandria, "Second Letter to Nestorius," 7.

[5] Gregory Nazianzen, "Against Apollinarius: The Second Letter to Cledonius," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Vol. VII, 443-444.

according to the manner of the spirit and the body. In reality, the unity of two natures is much more supreme than this example itself, as the Church divine (i.e. Gregory the Theologian) himself says: "There is no one and another one; God forbids, because they are one after the union, after God's becoming man and man's becoming God".[6] And in another place, he says: "If He was two, clearly it was by nature and not by person".[7]

Therefore, when we say one nature, let no one consider that it is addressed to any person but to the indivisible union of two natures, which we have learned from the Orthodox divines of the Church and especially from [the writings] of Saint Cyril of Alexandria against Nestorius. In fact, in his "First Letter to Succensus", he writes: "We confess one nature of the Incarnate Word as the fathers have said".[8] In a Second Letter addressed to the same person, he says the same in a more explicit way. By setting forth first the objections of the opponents, who were against his definition of "one is the nature of the Incarnate Word", he says: "If they say that Emmanuel was composed of two natures and after the union the Incarnate Word appears as one nature, it follows that in every way, it should be said that He was subject to passion in His own nature".[9] In responding to them, among several arguments, he says: "Was it necessary to undergo passion in His own nature, although it is said that after the union one is the nature of the Incarnate Son"?[10] For, if the Word in the incarnation was not subject to passion, they would have said directly that in every way it was necessary for the nature of the Word to undergo passion. And again Saint Cyril says: "The opponents say that if it is one the nature of the Incarnate Word, it must therefore in a way there is every necessity to say that a confusion and mixture occurred [in the union] since human nature was consumed in Him. Again, those who pervert what is right have not known that there is in truth one incarnate nature of the Word".[11] Then Saint Cyril affirms the same with an example: "Not only in the case of those which are simple by nature is 'one' truly used, but also in respect to those natures which have been united together according to a synthesis. For example man is composed of spirit and body, and these are of different natures and are not consubstantial to each other; but when united they constitute one nature of man, even though in the synthesis, the difference exists according to the nature of those that have been brought together into a unity. Accordingly they are speaking in vain who say that if there should be one incarnate nature of the Word, in every way and in every manner it would follow that a confusion occurred as if lessening and taking away the nature of man. For neither has it been lessened, nor is it taken away".[12]

There are also several statements made by Saint Cyril and other [Church] divines supporting the same argument which your supreme intelligence is aware of. The same [Church] divine who said this against the dividers makes the following statement in the same First Letter against those who say one nature confusedly: "Considering the mode of his incarnation we see that two natures came together with each other in an indissoluble union, unconfusedly and immutably. For his flesh is flesh and not Godhead, even though it became the flesh of God, and equally the Word also is God and not flesh, even though

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[6] Ibid., 440-441.

[7] Cf. Gregory Nazianzen, "On the Words of the Gospel," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Vol. VII, 340; Idem, "On the Theophany or Birth Day of Christ," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Vol. VII, 349-350.

[8] Cyril of Alexandria, "First Letter," 77.

[9] Cyril of Alexandria, "Second Letter," 85.

[10] Ibid., 87.

[11] Ibid., 87.

[12] Ibid., 89.

in fulfillment of God's plan he made the flesh his own".[13] Further on he says: "As far as concerns our understanding and only the contemplation by the eyes of the spirit in what manner the only Begotten became man, we say that there are two natures which are united, and one Christ the Son and Lord, the Word made man and incarnate".[14]

Having these to guide us on the way to truth, which leads to God, we can rightly and freely refer to both formulas by saying: 'one nature of the Incarnate Word,' according to Saint Cyril for the ineffable union, and 'two natures', according to Gregory the Theologian, to preserve the divine and the human natures immutable and imperishable. We do not hold the armour of righteousness one-sidedly; we hold it on the right hand and on the left as well, according to the Apostle (2 Cor. 6:7), as the brave soldiers of Christ did and taught. For, as against Arius' division of the nature of the Trinity, they (i.e. the church fathers) affirmed the unity[15] of the nature of the Trinity as taught by Sabellius, rejecting at the same time any consideration of the Trinity's persons as being one; and as against Sabellius' separation of the persons, which was taken from Arius, they uprooted from the church any division of the one nature [of the Holy Trinity]; likewise, they despised and condemned the confusion brought about by Eutyches and his followers. They also asserted the inseparable unity of the two natures, divine and human, against Nestorius and against those who, like him, are dividers and who affirmed two natures, divided not united, in the one Christ. They rejected the division of Nestorius as a weed (Mt. 13:25) of bitterness; and, against Eutyches and all those who before or after him have wickedly said one nature, they affirmed that in unity the two natures, divine and human, remained unchangeable. This is similar to the example of medical doctors, who make medicines of life not only from healthy but also from deadly materials.

Therefore, in keeping with the tradition of the Orthodox fathers, we too anathemize all those who confess one nature of the incarnate Word by fusion and mutation, and [who hold] that He did not derive His human nature from our substance and joined it to His Godhead, but created a body for Himself in the womb of the Virgin or brought it from heaven or became man by appearance, not truly. We anathemize also all those who, for other similar reasons and not for inseparable and unconfused unity, say [that there is] one nature in Christ. We, likewise, anathemize all those who divide the one Christ into two natures, as Nestorius did, maintaining that God is other and man is other—the man passible and dead, and God impassible and immortal—and do not attribute to the union [of the two natures] both passibility and impassibility, death and immortality.

We believe that God the Word, begotten from the Father before all eternities, the invisible, the impassible and the immortal, has assumed from the Virgin our own nature perfectly and has united it to His divine nature by an unconfused and indivisible union. And the one, who was invisible according to divinity became visible according to our human nature, the intangible became tangible, and the impassible and immortal according to His divine nature suffered and died with our nature. We do not divide the natures, as though one were passible and the other impassible, one immortal and the other dead. He who was passible and died by His human nature—which was assumed by Him—the same was impassible and immortal by His divine nature. For this reason, it is said, 'the blood of God (Act. 20:28; Heb. 9:12)', 'passion and death of God (Act. 20:28; Heb. 9:12-14; Eph. 1:7)', 'God was crucified (1 Cor. 1:23; Heb. 6:6)', and similar other expressions, which we do not attribute to the divine nature alone, but to the ineffable union.[16] For

[13] Cyril of Alexandria, "First Letter," 75.

[14] Ibid., 77.

[15] J, miut'iwn (unity); five Mss. miaworut'iwn (unification, union). These terms have the same meaning and are used interchangeably in a Christological context.

[16] Cf. Cyril of Alexandria, "Third Letter to Nestorius," 25; Idem, "First Letter," 73

example, as it was impossible for the divine nature alone to accept passion and die, it was also impossible for human nature alone to give life to the human being by death. But, through the union of the Word of God with the rational nature of man, the unthinkable became thinkable and the impossible possible. For, the impassible was suffered through the passible and the immortal was dead through the mortal, by which we came to life again (Col. 2:20-23; 3:1-2); we, who are His body and limbs united to our living and life-giving Head, Christ (Eph. 4:25), who is blessed eternally, Amen.

This is more or less a short summary[17]—given from our shallow and weak knowledge to your supreme wisdom—in order to acquaint you with the whole and unalterable confession of faith of the Armenian Church on the Holy Trinity and the economy of Christ. From one part you are able to perceive the whole, as those who with very little taste can find out among the meals and spirits the tasty or the untasty. We shall provide in writing to your holy Kingship a full statement, covering all the issues and the differences existing between us, when the council takes place, as we have indicated. This was written in Six Hundred Nineteen according to the Armenian calendar (1170) and in the Armenian month of Areg and in the Greek month of October.

[17] The points briefly discussed in this letter are dealt with at length in the Profession of Faith and Definition of Faith.

## Confession of Faith by Emperor Claudius-Gelawdewos (1555) (Extracts)[1]

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: one God. This is my Faith, and the Faith of my Fathers, Kings of Israel; and the Faith of my flock, which is within the fold, my kingdom. We believe in One God; and in His only Son, Jesus Christ, His word and His Power, His Counsel and His Wisdom; who was with Him before the World was created: And in the last days, He came unto us; not laying aside the throne of His Godhead: and was made Man of the Holy Ghost, and of Mary the Holy Virgin: and He was baptized in the River Jordan, in His thirtieth year; And He was perfect man; and He was crucified on the Wood of the Cross, in the days of Pontius Pilate; He suffered,died, and was buried; And He rose again on the third day; and then on the fortieth day ascended with glory into Heaven, and sat on the right-hand of His Father; And He shall come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end (...).

[1] From H. Hyatt, *The Church of Abyssinia*, London, 1928, 292, itself a translation from H. Ludolf, *Historia Aethiopica, vol, II* (Frankfort, 1681), 237.

## Statement of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (1970) (Extracts)[1]

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church considers itself to belong to the One, Holy, Universal and Apostolic Church founded by Jesus Christ (...) The Ethiopian Church belongs to the group of Orthodox Churches wrongly termed "Monophysite" but which prefer the epithet "non-Chalcedonian" (...) The wrongly called Monophysites reject the allegation that they teach one Nature and one Person in Christ. The teaching of the Ethiopian Church may thus be summarized:

1. The Ethiopian Church rejects Eutyches, who is believed to have taught that in Christ the human Nature was absorbed by the divine Nature. Nestorius also is excluded.

2. Dioscorus, whom the Council of Chalcedon deposed, is accepted. But it should be remembered that the Council of 451 did not believe that Dioscorus was a heretic. Dioscorus did not deny the continuance of Godhead and Manhood in the One Christ after their union and he agreed with the Council that the teaching which Eutyches was understood to hold was heretical.

3. The teaching of the Ethiopian Church is the Faith of the Fathers expounded by the great theologians of the Alexandrine tradition, especially by St. Cyril and his illustrious theological followers. Accordingly the Ethiopian Church maintains that Christ is perfect God and perfect Man, at once consubstantial with the Father and with us; the divinity and the humanity continuing in Him without mixture or separation, confusion or change. He is one and the same Person both in his eternal pre-existence and also in the economy, in which he performs the redeeming work of God on behalf of man, from the indivisible state of union of Godhead and Manhood.

4. The Church abides by the formula "The one Incarnate Nature of God the Word", on which St Cyril of Alexandria increasingly insisted, a formula which was accepted as correct by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D and which, after the Council of Chalcedon, the Chalcedonian side in the East itself admitted.

5. It is unfair for the Church to be nicknamed "monophysite" by the faithful who accept the Chalcedonian formula of "two natures in the one Person of Jesus Christ", because the expression used by the non-Chalcedonian side was always *mia physis*, and never *monophysis* (*mia* standing for a composite unity unlike *mone* standing for an elemental unity). Therefore these churches are best referred to as the non-Chalcedonian Orthodox Churches.

6. "Tewahedo" is the Ethiopian term (meaning "made one") which is the best expression conveying the Faith of the Church, since it emphasizes the inseparable unity of the Godhead and Manhood in the Person of Christ. The Church's official title is the "Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Bete Christian".

7. After the Union, Christ was no longer in two natures. The two natures became united into one nature without separation, without confusion and without change. Thus He was at the same time perfect God and perfect man. This is the union of the natures in the Incarnation. After the union Christ is not two persons or two natures, but one Person, one incarnate Nature of God the Son, with one will, but being at once divine and human. If you separate the natures after the union and say that Christ is in two natures, you will be confronted with serious problems. You will have to admit, for instance, that Christ was crucified merely as a man and that therefore he did not redeem the world, for God alone

[1] *The Ethiopian Church* (Addis Ababa: Patriarchate, 1970), 96-100

is able to accomplish the world's redemption. In brief, it is held that Christ, in acting, acted as a united being, not separately as man or separately as God.

8. Proof that we believe in the continuance of divinity and humanity in the One Christ may be illustrated:

a) In the Communion we receive the very body and blood of Jesus Christ. These belong to man, humanity and we know that Jesus Christ is God, divinity.

b) The present Liturgy can be used as a criterion of the Church. There it is openly expressed that there is divinity and humanity in Christ.

c) The Chalcedonian formula was rejected because it was thought to destroy the one Person of Christ and there was no clear distinction between "nature" and "person". Person meant nature.

d) We believe the Nicaean Creed in which the divinity and humanity of Christ are set forth, and in the Creed of the liturgy we declare our belief in the co-equally of Jesus Christ with God the Father, and belief in his having grown like men, yet without sin or evil, and in his having taken flesh from Mary.

e) The confession of Faith by the Emperor Claudius declares that Jesus Christ was perfect man and perfect God. Monophysitism is rejected. It is a question of error in vocabulary, the concepts of Nature and Person not being clear and there being obscurity in philosophical terms such as *physis*, *hypostasis*, *ousia*, *prosopon*, *atreptos*, *mia*, *mono* etc. As to the two natures of Christ the Dyophysites and non-Chalcedonians are one, it is a matter of interpretation after the union of the two natures. Happily the Dyophysites are currently realizing the position.

## Confession of Faith by the Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarch Tewoflos (1970) (Extracts. It was invoked at his ordination)[1]

(...) I confess, again, that one of the Holy Trinity, namely God the Son through Whom everything has been brought into being, for us and for our salvation, came down from heaven and became incarnate and was made man really and perfectly from Mary the Virgin, Mother of God. He united to himself a body taken from the Virgin Mother through the operation of the Holy Spirit, became perfect man, consubstantial with us, unchangeably and inseparably, unconfusedly and indivisibly. God the Son united to Himself hypostatically manhood, taken from the Holy Virgin, which was endowed with a rational soul. The two natures of Godhead and manhood became so united in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son that they, with their respective properties, continue dynamically in Him. The one Lord Jesus Christ is thus perfect God, the Same being also perfect man, with the single exception that He is absolutely sinless.

Jesus is the one and the only Son, being composed of two natures which continue in Him without reduction or division. He is one Hypostasis, one Prosopon, and one[2] Nature incarnate of God the Son. Jesus Christ is the same, at once perfect God and perfect man. All the divine properties on the one hand, and the human properties in the other, are in Him, without confusion or division. Therefore, all the words He spoke, and all the deeds He performed, were expressions of His Person; formed of a union of Godhead and manhood. In Him Godhead and manhood came to their ultimate union, and in this union He lives eternally with the Father and the Holy Spirit as the Mediator between God and man.

God became man, says St. Athanasius, in order that man may become divine. Through His dispensation Jesus Christ has accomplished the salvation of the world once and for all. The salvation consists, in a world, in bringing man to an unbroken relation with God, whereby man is enabled to realize divine Sonship and live a life confidence, peace and love here and now, as well as in the hope of eternal life in the world to come. Born of a human mother, Jesus Christ passed through all levels of human existence, always maintaining His unbroken Sonship with God the Father; He died on the cross facing the forces of evil; but He rose again from the dead, triumphant over evil, suffering and death. This victory has been won by him for our human race, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. The crucified and risen Christ founded the Church in order that the redemption which He accomplished may be realized in human history (...).

[1] *The Ethiopian Herald*, May 1971.

[2] The "one" Nature here refers to the unity, not to any reduction as is sometimes erroneously construed.

## Confession of Faith by the Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarch Pawlos (1992) (Extracts)[1]

(...) God is one. He is called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit... I believe and confess that God, the Son, one of the Trinity, came down from heaven for our salvation and was born human, taking from the Virgin Mary, flesh from her flesh, and soul from her soul. The Son, the eternal God, who is one in nature with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, uniting with himself the flesh which He took from Virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit, became perfect man like us; He embodied our nature. God, the Son, united with himself in one person and one nature the flesh and rational soul that He took from the Holy Virgin Mary. The one Jesus Christ is perfect God, and He is perfect man. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the natural Son of the Father. And in him, the nature of Godhead and the nature of the flesh have become one without separation and without division. Christ is one person and one nature. When we say, "One person and one nature," saying "one" informs perfect unity; it does not exhibit, as the heretics say, mutual desorption (...) As Saint Athanasius has said, God became man so that man may become God. And that is Jesus Christ. And with this generosity of his, Jesus Christ achieved the salvation of the world. And by his (ability of a) saviour, He reconciled man with God the Father and won back to man God's childhood. He enabled man to live with hope and love so that that He may find eternal life in the world to come. Jesus Christ was born from Our Lady Virgin Mary and lived on earth doing everything that humans do except sin. However, all this happened without him being separated from his natural Father and his natural life, the Holy Spirit. Christ died on the Cross to conquer the power of Satan for us. He rose victoriously from among the dead on the third day. The victory that Christ won by his Resurrection is for all of humankind found in the whole world. His salvation has been given to all without discrimination against race and kind. The reason that Christ, who was crucified and rose from among the dead, founded the Church is for the salvation He won by his Cross and Resurrection to be revealed to the whole world throughout the history of humankind. Christ lives forever dwelling in the Church (...)

[1] Unauthorized translation by Getatchew Haile of the text published (in Addis Ababa) on Hamle 5, 1984 EC (= 7/12/1992): Pawlos, *Confession* (1984 EC = 1992 AD). *የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተክርስቲያን ፷ኛ ፓትርያርክ ቃለ ሃይማኖት (መሐለ)* ሐምሌ ፭ ቀን ፲፱፻፺፪ ዓ/ም, 3-8.

## Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky and the Ancient Oriental Churches[1] (For the Centenary of His Demise)[2]

*Archimandrite Avgustin Nikitin (Docent of the Leningrad Theological Academy)*

A century ago ended the earthly labour of an eminent Russian Orthodox Church figure, the founder of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem, and the author of many works on the history of the Christian East, Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky.[3] His sojourn for a number of years in the Middle East enabled him to study the liturgical life and peculiarities of the doctrine of the Ancient Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Churches—the Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopian. However, the first contacts of Archimandrite Porfiriy with representatives of one of the Ancient Oriental Churches—the Armenian—as a result of which the idea of the possible reunion of the Armenian Apostolic and Orthodox Churches emerged, go back to the time when he was the Rector of the Theological Seminary in Odessa.

In his letter to his friend A. S. Sturdza[4] dated December 30, 1841, Father Porfiriy mentions his meeting with the Armenian Bishop Nerses, who was later to become the Supreme Catholicos of All Armenians (1843-1857): "(...) since 1833 I have met the Armenian Bishop Nerses a number of times in Kishinev and talked with him about this matter [the union of the two Churches], for I carry a prayerful wish to see these two early Churches united (...) It is difficult to say who will proclaim peace and good will on 'the heights of Ararat, Caucasus and Taurus Mountains, but God the Word will not be short of preachers" [3, Vol. II, p. 64].

On December 20, 1843, Archimandrite Porfiriy arrived in Jerusalem. During, the two and half years of his first sojourn in the Middle East he often met the clergy of those Churches which had their representatives in the Holy Land.

In his conversations with the Armenian Patriarch Zachariah, Father Porfiriy often touched on the question of reestablishing Christian unity. Once he said: "If the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon had been translated into the Armenian language from the Greek by one who knew both languages well and not by a semi-literate Greek, then the Armenian Church would have remained one with and undivided from the great Orthodox Church to this day. However, what was divided by reason, or passion must be united by love" [4, Vol. 1, p. 606].

During his sojourn in the Middle East, Archimandrite Porfiriy travelled much through Palestine, Syria, and Egypt. He visited Christian shrines and studied ancient manuscripts kept in the monastery archives. At the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos, Father Porfiriy came across certain documents relating to the attempts to re-establish Church unity between the Armenian Apostolic and Orthodox Churches in the 12th century. This is what he reported concerning this matter to Metropolitan Antoniy of St. Petersburg (Rafalsky; 1843-1848) in his letter dated February 12, 1846, from

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[1] In the 19th century Metropolitan Porphyriy Uspensky (1804-1885), a Russian theologian and orientalist, met Oriental Orthodox prelates and clergy in Russia, in Egypt as well as in Palestine where he was sent for founding the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission. After many conversations he was convinced that these ancient Christian Churches were Orthodox/not monophysites and wrote books and articles about this matter. As a visionary for the dialogue he already wrote about the problem of the misunderstanding of terminology, in his Diary (vol. 1 published in St. Petersburg in 1894). See http://orthodoxwiki.org/Porphyrius_%28Uspensky%29_of_Chigirin

[2] Published in *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate 2* (1986), 57-68

[3] Archimandrite Agafangel, "Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky," *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* 5 (1975): 78-80; 6: 62-72.

[4] Aleksandr Skarlatovich Sturdza (1791-1854), a diplomat in the Russian service of the-Romano-Moldavian origin.

Constantinople: "Some religious heads of the Armenian people were aware since olden times of their schism and sought convincing arguments to assert the veracity of the Eastern Orthodox Church by means of scholarly discussion and research, and had indeed begun to be united to this Church in the New Rome [Constantinople]. A wonderful example of similar previsional communion took place in late 12th century. The manuscript act of this communion has been found by me in the library of the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos. It comprises: (a) the letters of Manuel I Comnenus, Emperor of Byzantine (the year 6678, i. e. 1170) to the Armenian Catholicos Nerses IV Shnorhali; (b) scholarly discourse of Magister Feorian with this Catholicos and (c) Nerses's reply to Manuel"[5] [3 Vol. II, pp. 165-166]. Father Porfiriy notes that "Feorian's Discourse" was already printed by Greek researchers in Leipzig (as well as by the Catholics) and that "Feorian's Discourse" is a superb guide to the conversion of the Armenian people to Orthodoxy. "As for the letters of Emperor Manuel and Catholicos Nerses", Father Porfiriy continues, "I consider them a find, for I doubt they have ever been published" [*ibid*. p. 166].

Sending Metropolitan Antoniy copies of the tractates, which had an important bearing on the matter of re-establishing Church unity, Archimandrite Porfiriy once again stressed the need to have them published. "Order these letters and the entire 'Feorian's Discourse' to be translated, but have them translated and revised by an expert in Greek", he begged Metropolitan Antoniy. "(...) In my opinion 'Feorian's Discourse' should be published as a manual for our clergy in those areas where Armenians reside. I heard that the Armenians have the correspondence between Manuel and Nerses, and 'Feorian's Discourse' in their language but are silent about it. It would be very interesting to compare the Greek and Armenian texts" [ibid.].

After staying a year on Mount Athos (1845-1846), Archimandrite Porfiriy left for Russia and began organizing actively the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem. His efforts were rewarded in 1847 and in the summer of that year he left for the Middle East as head of the mission.

As he did previously, Father Porfiriy visited Constantinople and on January 22, 1848, his meeting with the Armenian Patriarch Gregory of Constantinople took place.

In their conversation stressed was the exclusive importance of Echmiadzin as the spiritual centre of the Armenian people, where endeavours had been made to reunite the two Early Churches—the Armenian Apostolic and the Constantinopolitan. As Father Porfiriy said to Patriarch Gregory "the late Patriarch Johannes [John VIII of Calabria; 1831-1842] wrote to the Russian Emperor that your Church [Armenian] recognized the Seven Ecumenical Councils. Regarding this letter our Holy Synod [of the Russian Orthodox Church] asked that a detailed report be made of the Armenian Church doctrine. But the demise of His Beatitude put an end to this noble beginning. His successor [Nerses V; 1843-1857] replied that he did not have theologians capable of writing the doctrine and that he considered quite sufficient the exposition of faith written in the 12th century in the reign of King Manuel of Greece and his contemporary, Patriarch Nerses of Echmiadzin, who had agreed to accept Orthodoxy. This exposition of faith has been translated from Armenian into Russian last year [1847] and printed in St. Petersburg"[6] [4, Vol. Ill, 186]. Patriarch Gregory was greatly interested in this report, the more so as according to him nothing about this translation was known in Constantinople (meaning

[5] *Materialy dlya biografii episkopa Porfiria Uspenskogo* (Materials for the Biography of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky). Vol. I, "Official Documents". St. Petersburg, 1910; Vol. II, "Correspondence", St. Petersburg, 1910.

[6] *Dnevniki i aftobiograficheskie zapiski episkopa Porfiria Uspenskogo* (The Diary and Autobiographical Notes of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky). In seven volumes, St. Petersburg, 1894-1901; Vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1894; Vol. Ill, St. Petersburg, 1896; Vol. IV, St. Petersburg, 1896; Vol. V, St. Petersburg, 1899; Vol. VII, St. Petersburg, 1901.

the book, *Historical Monuments of the Armenian Church Doctrine of the 12th Century* (translated from Armenian by A. Khudobashev, St. Petersburg, 1847).

Archimandrite Porfiriy's sojourn in Jerusalem as Head of the Russian Orthodox Mission was terminated by the beginning of the Crimean War in October of 1853. He left Jerusalem on May 8, 1854, and on October 2 reached St. Petersburg. It should be noted that during the war with Turkey the safety of the members of the Russian Orthodox Mission was constantly in jeopardy. Back in 1849, Father Porfiriy wrote about the signs of the danger in his letters and that in case of need he trusted in the aid of the Armenian clergy in Jerusalem. This is what, for instance, he advised a member of the Russian Orthodox Mission, Hieromonk Feofan Govorov: "If the consulates [of West European States] does not take measures for your safety, I order you take refuge in the Armenian monastery. Therefore, on the day the news of the war arrives, go directly to the Armenian Patriarch and deliver to him the letter enclosed herewith (...) and ask him to give asylum to you and your things which should be packed beforehand" [3 Vol. II, pp. 284-285]. The letter goes on to give detailed advice, in conclusion Father Porfiriy writes: "If I shall be forced to flee to Russia I shall write to you via the Patriarch of Echmiadzin" [286]. This letter proves eloquently that Father Porfiriy saw in the representatives of the Armenian clergy loyal friends upon whom he could rely in the direst situations.

In the years 1854-1858, Archimandrite Porfiriy was in Russia and spent the interim in a profound study of the extensive materials he had gathered during his sojourn in the East. In his writings he returns again and again to the question of when and why the Armenians had separated from the Orthodox Church and from whence the process of reunion could be started.

In analyzing this problem, Father Porfiriy notes that Armenian bishops had taken part in the acts of the First and Second Ecumenical Councils [4, Vol. VII, p. 33]. As for the Third Ecumenical Council, Archimandrite Porfiriy continues, "the Armenian Patriarch Isaac was invited to the Third Ecumenical Council which condemned Nestorius, and although he could not attend because he was detained by the King of Persia, but the decisions and canons of the council were sent to him; he accepted them and conciliarly anathematized Nestorius" [*ibid*.].

Interesting is Father Porfiriy's opinion of subsequent events which caused schism in the Church. He considers that only political differences between the Greeks and Armenians, which became acute in the middle of the 5th century, caused the rift and the termination of Eucharistic Communion. Archimandrite Porfiriy writes that the "pretext for the separation was the Council of Chalcedon which took place in A. D. 451. There were no Armenians at this council because at that time they were at war with King Shapure of Persia. Their absence, political strife with the Greeks, and, in addition, the incorrect translation with the consequent misinterpretation of the doctrine and Definition of the Council of Chalcedon caused part of the Armenians to repudiate the council which had decided that two natures in Christ, the Divine and human in one Person, should be confessed. The proof that the repudiation was only external and caused by misunderstanding is the fact that the Armenians, in accordance with the Definition of Chalcedon confessed by the Greeks and Latins, believed, and do so now, that Jesus Christ is perfect God and perfect Man and therefore assert that the two natures were united in Jesus Christ unconfusedly, without change from Divinity to humanity and humanity to Divinity and that the properties of the two natures, the Divine and human, remained unchanged" [*ibid.*, pp. 33-34]. In the opinion of Archimandrite Porfiriy, what was needed on the part of Orthodox Christians for reconciling the two Churches was, "first of all, zeal for this sacred cause; secondly reaffirmation of the ban of our Synod (1841) on printing in our ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical books expressions bitter to the Armenians (...); thirdly, the most detailed exposition of the Orthodox doctrine and its submission to the council of Armenian bishops for their signature, defining in it in the simplest words the

Person of Jesus Christ as perfect God and perfect Man; fourthly, church marriages between Armenians and Russians should be sanctioned and Baptism be administered to children in the Armenian or in our Church according to the mutual consent of the parents" [*ibid*., p. 35].

In May 1858, Archimandrite Porfiriy went for the third time to the East for scholarly purposes. Of great value for the understanding of his position in regard to the Armenian Apostolic Church are the notes made by him in December I860, in Cairo where he met both Coptic and Armenian clergymen. In his diary, Archimandrite Porfiriy records in detail his conversation with His Grace Gabriel, the Armenian Bishop of Cairo, which took place on December 28, 1860. "I was introduced to the Armenian Bishop of Cairo, Gabriel, an estimable grey-haired elder", Father Porfiriy recalls. "The Armenian bishop in reply to my question as to the number of his flock in Cairo (1,.200) and Alexandria (much less) mentioned that the Copts and Armenians in Egypt had joined hands in order to stand firmly against the attacks of the Roman Catholics and Protestants. 'And amicably renew union with us', I put in, 'for we do not consider you heretics'. Here, by the way, I told him that I had published a book in which I explain that the Armenians and Copts confess the same Faith as we do and that they are our brothers in the Lord. After hearing me out Bishop Gabriel touched his forehead and heart with his hand as a sign of approval" [*ibid.*, p. 321]. Here Archimandrite Porfiriy had in mind the book *Doctrine, Divine Service, Order of Service and Rules of Ecclesiastical Decorum of Egyptian Christians (Copts)* (St. Petersburg, 1856). Archimandrite Porfiriy expounds his conversation with Bishop Gabriel in great detail because it contained his theological position in regard to the Armenian Apostolic Church. "Allow me to repeat what is pleasing and useful to both of us", Father Porfiriy said to the Armenian bishop. "In Russia I was the first to say in print that the Copts and Armenians are not heretics. My book, in which this is stated and proven, has been approved by our Holy Synod. After this the entire Russian Church has recognized you as our elder brothers in the Lord and is ready to stretch her hand to you" [*ibid.*, p. 324].

The meeting of the two ecclesiastical figures—these champions of Christian unity—soon took place again. On December 30, 1860, at the invitation of Bishop Gabriel, Archimandrite Porfiriy visited the Armenian Bishopric in Cairo and wrote the following: "The bishop himself awaited me in the grounds of the bishopric as well as the priests, deacons and juvenile hypodeacons (...) holding lighted wax candles and palms, there were also several venerable Armenians (...) Inside the church I ascended the high and open platform before the sanctuary, kissed the Holy Gospel, the Cross and the altar, then kneeling I said a short but ardent prayer to God on the renewal of union between the Armenians, the Copts and us (...)" [*ibid.*, p. 333].

In greater detail Archimandrite Porfiriy elaborated and expounded his theological views regarding the non-Chalcedonian Churches when trying to establish communion with the Coptic Church about which he was able to learn much during his first sojourn in the Middle East in the years 1843-1846.

As mentioned already, in 1843 Archimandrite Porfiriy was sent for the first time to Jerusalem and stayed there for two and a half years. In that time he was able to visit Palestine, Syria and Egypt.

In 1850, Archimandrite Porfiriy, who was already the Head of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem, made another trip to Egypt accompanied by members of the mission. During that trip he visited a number of monasteries, among them the famous

cloister of Sts. Antony the Great and Paul of Thebes in which Coptic monks resided at that time.[7]

Archimandrite Porfiriy arrived at the preliminary conclusion even then that "the Coptic Church was very close to our Orthodox Church in her rules, rites and even dogmas, with the exception of some articles of the faith. She is like a small granary in which the wheat is mixed with weeds" [3, Vol. II, p. 153].

During these years Archimandrite Porfiriy studied the liturgical heritage of the Coptic Church, her history and canon law. The result was an extensive monograph on the Coptic Church.[8]

He came to the conclusion that the widespread view among Orthodox Christians that the Copts were heretics, dogmatically speaking, was wrong and that there are no insurmountable dogmatic differences between the Russian and Coptic Churches. "The similarity noted by me during this trip between the Coptic doctrine and orders and our own", writes Father Porfiriy, "made me take up, in my cell at Jerusalem, the study of Coptic theology, their divine services, ecclesiastical law, *Chetii Minei*, chronicles and religious literature. The closer I studied these subjects the more I became convinced that these Christians, although they had not accepted the symbolical apophthegms of the Orthodox Church about the Person of the God-Man, yet held to her way of interpreting Holy Scripture and preaching, to her Apostolic and patristic traditions (before 451 A. D.), the canons of the first three Ecumenical Councils, the essence and composition of early liturgies and prayers, containing many Greek words and sayings; they also venerate the angels and saints, revere icons and observe fasts, and their churches within are arranged similarly to ours" [*ibid.*, pp. 2-3].

Archimandrite Porfiriy considered that the basic aim of publishing his work was "on the one hand, to widen the horizon of our knowledge, and on the other, to show the contiguous aspects of Church life of the Copts and of ours, and to acquire the right manner and outlook in order to bring them to the Orthodox Church by way of that love which alone believes in the immutability of the Lord's promise that *there shall be one fold, and one shepherd* and alone can draw to Him the deluded brethren" [*ibid.*, pp. 3-4]. Archimandrite Porfiriy expounds in his work the fundamentals of the doctrinal system of the Coptic Church and expresses his own opinion on the matter after analyzing the texts of the confessions of faith of the Coptic Patriarchs Sanuty (9$^{th}$ century) and Mina (10$^{th}$ century), Bishop Sanuty of Cairo (11$^{th}$ century) as well as the exposition of the faith of the 1239 Council of the Coptic Church.

Archimandrite Porfiriy deduces that the Copts "recognize the two natures in the Saviour, the Divine and human, endowed with a reasonable soul but in such a way that after they were united they became one nature and one Person with one will and one action" [*ibid.*, p. 13]. He notes also that the Copts base this theological formula, not quite in the tradition of the Orthodox Church, on the well-known apophthegm of St. Cyril of Alexandria: "We confess the one nature of God the Word incarnate" [*ibid.*]. For the further study of the Coptic Christological teaching, Father Porfiriy adduces the apophthegms on this question of the Holy Fathers of the Church such as St. Athanasius the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom and, finally, St. Cyril of Alexandria. By collating the apophthegms of the Holy Fathers and the texts of the Coptic exposition of the faith, Archimandrite Porfiriy draws the conclusion: "The

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[7] Archimandrite Porfiriy Uspensky. *Puteshestvie po Egiptu i v monastyri svyatogo Andonia Velikogo i prepodobnogo Pavla Fiveiskogo in 1850* (Travels in Egypt and to the Monastery of St. Antony the Great and St. Paul of Thebes in 1850). St. Petersburg, 1856.

[8] By the same author: *Verouchenie, bogosluzhenie, chinopolozhenie i pravila tserkovnogo blagochinia egipetskikh Khristian (koptov)* (Doctrine, Divine Service, Order of Service, and the Rules of Church Decorum of Egyptian Christians [Copts]). St. Petersburg, 1856.

Copts are right. They, just as the Armenians, are not heretics, and should not be called Monophysites in the sense of the coalescence or change of the two natures of Christ into one, because they not only reject, but anathematize the coalescence and in accordance with the Catholic Church sincerely confess the union of the two natures and the formation from them of the one Hypostasis without any change in their properties" [*ibid.*, p. 25].

Archimandrite Porfiriy did not limit himself to the theoretical study of the Coptic Christology. During his travels over Egypt, he became convinced that the Christological teaching lives in the hearts of both theologians and common believers residing "in Cairo, Siut, El Fayum, Manfalute, Akhmin and along the Nile rapids"[9]. And again he stresses his conclusions regarding the Copts, affirming that "they had sinned only by introducing into their Creed the apophthegms not acceptable to the Holy Catholic Church—'one will and one action'—although in these words they express now what we do, that is, the complete agreement between the two natural wills and actions of the God-Man"[10].

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that Archimandrite Porfiriy did not see the difficulties on the way to a possible rapprochement. He was perfectly aware of the fact that although to reveal unity on basic dogmatic questions was necessary, it was far from sufficient for establishing complete ecclesiastical communion between the Orthodox and non-Chalcedonian Churches. That is why he set out for the future the following questions to be considered and answered definitely: "(1) Are the unity of universal faith, hope and love, universal Tradition and universal rules of decorum sufficient for the eternal salvation of the so-called Monophysites who are close to us? (2) Should their divine services, rites and hierarchy be left inviolate seeing "that their ecclesiastical books contain one and the same dogmas only set out in a different dialect and different expressions, moreover they have preserved all the stages of the priesthood with the successive imposition of the hands? (3) How can we reconcile our consciences and calm their souls seeing that they have prayerfully communed with Dioscorus and Severus [of Antioch], and others whom they venerated as saints and whom the Holy Catholic Church has spiritually bound?"[11].

Archimandrite Porfiriy was anxious to acquaint the Russian Orthodox people as broadly as possible with the information he had gathered during his lengthy and difficult travels over Egypt - as well as with his conclusions regarding the dogmatic teachings of the Coptic Church and her attitude to Orthodoxy. This is what he wrote in 1857 to the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, A. P. Tolstoi, in connection with his book *Doctrine, Divine Service, Order of Service, and Rules of Church Decorum of the Egyptian Christians (Copts)* and a number of other essays on the history of the Coptic Church: "I would like to give this book and these essays to the libraries of our theological academies, seminaries, and schools".[12]

Archimandrite Porfiriy attentively observed the life of the Coptic Church and kept notes of the most important events taking place within her. Thus in the spring of 1853, hearing of the demise of the Patriarch of the Coptic Church, he noted: "Eleven Coptic hierarchs are electing a Patriarch to take the place of Peter who departed in the

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[9] By the same author: *Verouchenie, bogosltizhenie, chinopolozhenie i pravila tserkovnogo blagochinia egipetskikh Khristian (koptov)* (Doctrine, Divine Service, Order of Service, and the Rules of Church Decorum of Egyptian Christians [Copts]). St. Petersburg, 1856, 41

[10] [*ibid.*, pp. 42-43]

[11] [*ibid.*, pp. 44-45]

[12] *Materialy dlya biografii episkopa Porfiria Uspenskogo* (Materials for the Biography of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky). Vol. I, "Official Documents". St. Petersburg, 1910; Vol. II, "Correspondence", St. Petersburg, 1910, 627

Lord"[13]. Father Porfiriy understood well that the success of the rapprochement between the two Churches depended a great deal on the position the newly-elected Patriarch might take on this question. And in August of the same year he noted with satisfaction: "The Copts have elected my bosom friend, Hegumen David (a Copt) in the place of the late Patriarch but only as Locum Tenens. He has been elevated to the dignity of metropolitan and renamed Cyril. Yesterday I received from him an amicable letter in which he tells me that thanks to my prayers very many obstacles had been removed in the way to his election and that he now administers the Coptic Abyssinian Church"[14].

The Russo-Turkish War, which began in October 1853, interrupted Archimandrite Porfiriy's six-year stay in Jerusalem as Head of the Russian Orthodox Mission. Father Porfiriy was destined to return to Jerusalem in 1858. On the eve of his third departure for the Holy Land he had a meeting with the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, A. P. Tolstoi, in St Petersburg. In their talk they touched upon the question of further efforts for rapprochement with the Coptic Church. Archimandrite Porfiriy wanted the matter to be made the cause of the whole Church saying: "For their reunion with us we should know the opinions of our and the Constantinople Synods: do they agree to the reunion with their rites maintained"?[15]. Soon after this talk there was a synodal decision (1858) directing Archimandrite Porfiriy "to renew in Egypt his contacts with the Coptic clergy whose attention to our Church was drawn by him on his previous trip (1850)"[16].

Once in Jerusalem, Archimandrite Porfiriy counted on renewing immediately his personal relations with Coptic Metropolitan Cyril, the Locum Tenens in Cairo, but he met with certain difficulties which hindered him from going there within the nearest period. Desiring to serve the cause of Christian unity, Father Porfiriy asked that his sojourn in the Middle East be extended up to April 26, 1860, "in order to continue our spiritual communion with our Eastern brothers in the Lord, and in order to initiate the union with the Egyptian Christians—the Copts"[17].

At last Father Porfiriy was on his way to Egypt. "It is time for me to go to Egypt," he wrote in his diary on December 24, 1860. "It is time to see the Coptic Patriarch Cyril and begin talks with him on a covert or overt reunion of the Orthodox Church with him and all his flock, reunion only dogmatically. O Lord, help me; O Lord, enlighten me. However, Thy will be done"! [4, Vol. VIII, p. 298].

On December 25, 1860, Archimandrite Porfiriy met in Cairo the Russian Consul General A. E. Lagovsky. It turned out that the consul was not informed of the forthcoming talks and Father Porfiriy told him his intentions in regard to the renewal of unity of the Copts and the Orthodox Church. "I shall firmly declare to him [the Coptic Patriarch]", Father Porfiriy said, "that the Holy Synod of All Russia has sent me to His Beatitude with the good news that this Synod and with it the entire Russian Church do not consider him nor all his subject hierarchs and priests and their flocks heretic Monophysites, but recognize them as their brothers in faith and in the order of divine services, despite some divergences in the rites, which do not dissolve the unity of faith and love.... You have anathematized both the Nestorians who divide the two natures in Christ and those who with Eutyches coalesce or change them into one; we too have anathematized them both. Consequently you and we are single-minded" [*ibid.*, pp. 302-

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[13] *Dnevniki i aftobiograficheskie zapiski episkopa Porfiria Uspenskogo* (The Diary and Autobiographical Notes of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky). Vol. V, 113.

[14] 138.

[15] 154

[16] *Materialy dlya biografii episkopa Porfiria Uspenskogo* (Materials for the Biography of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky). Vol. I, "Official Documents". St. Petersburg, 1910; Vol. II, "Correspondence", St. Petersburg, 1910. 917.

[17] 807

303]. Further on Father Porfiriy in his contemplated talk with the Head of the Coptic Church expounds briefly the Orthodox teaching about Christ the Saviour as perfect God and perfect Man and also elucidates this teaching in the sense that "according to the teaching of the Holy Orthodox Church in Jesus Christ there were not only two absolutely conforming wills, the Divine and human, but two actions, the Divine and human" [*ibid.*, p. 305]. Then Archimandrite Porfiriy as if addressing the Patriarch of the Coptic Church and basing himself on her doctrinal texts deduces the following: "You, Your Beatitude, hold to the same teaching. It is true that in your creed it is said that in Christ there is only one will and one action, but this is said in the sense in which St. Athanasius and St. Cyril of Alexandria used it in their apophthegm 'the one nature of the Word Incarnate'. As this expresses only the unity of the Word with the flesh, or God with man, without confusion or change, so too the words: 'one will and one action of the Lord' express the conformity and unity of His two natural wills and actions" [*ibid.*, p. 306].

Comparing the Christological definition of the Council of Chalcedon with the doctrine of St. Cyril of Alexandria, Archimandrite Porfiriy convincingly shows that "the Definition of Chalcedon was expressed in the words of St. Cyril of Alexandria" and deduces: "If the doctrine of this Father is recognized as true, then the Definition should also be recognized as such, the more so as the early creeds of the Coptic saints also agree with it. For they teach us to confess Christ as perfect God and perfect Man and as One Person in two natures united without confusion and change of their properties" [*ibid.*, p. 308].

In the opinion of Father Porfiriy, the recognition of the justice and truth of the given deductions on the part of the Copts would have been sufficient for their dogmatic union with the Orthodox Church. However there were practical difficulties for this and Archimandrite Porfiriy spoke boldly of them and tried in his own way to remove the obstacles standing in the way of complete Church communion. "Your spiritual ancestors-venerated, and you too venerate, Dioscorus, Severus and others hostile to the Council of Chalcedon, whom you venerate as saints and we anathematize,"' Archimandrite Porfiriy says. "But there is a way of eliminating this disagreement between us. Let us leave to the mercy of God to forgive those who sinned through ignorance, for human ignorance was forgiven on the Cross by the Saviour, and let us, on our part, no longer anathematize them and you, on your part, do not say prayers to them. Our common forgiveness of their sin of ignorance calls forth forgiveness of them in Heaven, because they did believe in the God-Man, only they stated their faith differently from the Universal Church" [*ibid.*, p. 309].

Here Father Porfiriy mentions the common liturgical heritage of both Churches, which he considered an extremely important argument in favour of establishing Eucharistic communion. "Your [Coptic] liturgies of Sts. Basil the Great, of Gregory of Nazianzus, and of Cyril of Alexandria in dogma, meaning, and order do not differ from our liturgies, the same too are the Apostolic ecphoneses in them: 'Let us lift up our hearts'; 'We give thanks to the Lord'; 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord of Sabaoth'; 'Take, eat; this is My Body'; 'Drink ye all of this; this is My Blood'; the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the Gifts and their transubstantiation into the Body and Blood through the inspiration of this Spirit", writes Archimandrite Porfiriy [*ibid.*].

In this way he formulated the dogmatic foundation for the attainment of communion between the Coptic and Russian Orthodox Churches.

Archimandrite Porfiriy foresaw canonical difficulties which would have inevitably arisen even if his proposals had been successfully implemented. The question here was first of all the early Alexandrian Church whose Primate had his seat in the same city as the Coptic Patriarch. In Archimandrite Porfiriy's opinion "the presence of the Coptic Patriarch in the same place as the Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, and their equal authority: one over the Orthodox and the other over the Copts and Abyssinians of one

faith—these difficulties could be eliminated according to the canon of the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus which says that the Church under certain circumstances could act not strictly according to the law *(akribeia)* but tolerantly *(oikonomia)"* [*ibid*., p. 314].

At last, on December 26, 1860, the first brief meeting between Archimandrite Porfiriy and the Coptic Patriarch Cyril took place. On the following day Father Porfiriy visited the residence of the Coptic Patriarch and attended Liturgy, during which two new bishops for the Coptic Church were consecrated. As a testimony of his good will, towards Father Porfiriy the Head of the Coptic Church gave him a Gospel and an Apostle in Coptic with Arabic translations printed in London.

Soon conditions changed sharply due to the illness of the Coptic Patriarch. On January 15, 1861, Archimandrite Porfiriy writes in his diary: "The grave illness of the Coptic Patriarch Cyril has worsened. The doctors say... that he will soon die...The sad news of his death has shaken me. It is hard to lose gold, diamonds or a rosary blessed with prayers, but incomparably harder is it to lose a friend, with whose help the Nile and the Neva could have been united" [*ibid.*, p. 339].

After the death of the Coptic Patriarch Cyril, the talks on the rapprochement of the Churches were not renewed. In his notes Father Porfiriy lamented over the obstacles placed before him by his own compatriots—diplomats—in the Middle East. Archimandrite Porfiriy explains their restrained position by their lack of a clear understanding of the great significance of religious belief in the Middle East; its great influence on political affairs as well: "If one should ask any of our diplomats, whether chief or subordinate, in St. Petersburg, Constantinople, Beirut or Cairo, about these principles, faith and doctrines; about the political weight of Nestorians, Jacobites, Copts, Yazidis, Kurds, Ansaries, Druzes, he would most likely waste his questions" [*ibid.*, p. 349].

Returning to his unfinished talks with the Copts Archimandrite Porfiriy mentions those on whom depended a great deal the course of its progress. "In Egypt I had to point out the error of our consul general [A. E. Lagovsky] who considered the Copts as followers of the heretic Eutyches when they zealously condemn this heresy and just when the Holy Synod, which is a few steps away from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [in St. Petersburg], had recognized their closeness to Orthodoxy", writes Porfiriy and asks: "To what has this error led? The head of the Copts in Egypt with five million Christians in Abyssinia and Shoa, would have come to the bosom of the Russian Church, but he was repulsed from her in Cairo as an infectious, uninvestigated, unknown and incomprehensible ulcer" [*ibid., p.* 350].

So closed this bright chapter in the history of the Russo-Coptic Church relations, and just as formerly topical are the words of Archimandrite Porfiriy: "I was destined to renew contacts with the Copts, but not fated to reunite them with our Church. I trust, however, that this important work will be continued... through other enlightened and zealous religious figures" [*ibid.*, p. 347].

While in Jerusalem as Head of the Russian Orthodox Mission, Archimandrite Porfiriy gave a great deal of attention to the study of the history and liturgical heritage of the Ethiopian Church. On his instruction members of the mission, P. Soloviev and N. Krylov translated into Russian those articles by Western scholars that dealt with the Ethiopian Church [3, Vol. I, p. 486]

In late 1860 and early 1861, commissioned by the Holy Synod, Archimandrite Porfiriy exerted effort to bring about the rapprochement between the Russian Orthodox and Coptic Churches. Because the Ethiopian Church at that time was canonically dependent on the Coptic Church, the activities of Archimandrite Porfiriy indirectly involved the Ethiopian Christians too. It was Father Porfiriy's idea to appoint an *apokrisiar* [Gr.—an advocate in ecclesiastical matters] who would undertake the preparations for the reunion of Copt Christians-with the Orthodox Church. It should be mentioned that Father Porfiriy was not averse to himself being the *apokrisiar* noting that "they talked in St.

Petersburg already in 1858 about appointing-one [the *apokrisiar]* in Cairo, having me in mind"[4, Vol. VII, p. 313].

As for the Ethiopian Church, as Archimandrite Porfiriy imagined, the Cairo *apokrisiar*, with two Abyssinians well versed in Russian, after travelling to Abyssinia could prepare the reunion of the Ethiopian Christians with Orthodoxy. The independence of the Ethiopian Church would have been guaranteed by the consecration of several bishops by the Coptic archbishop [*ibid.*]. Archimandrite Porfiriy proposed sending to Ethiopia as the *apokrisiar* from the Russian Orthodox Church, a member of the Russian Orthodox Mission, Yalrimovich [*ibid.*, p. 316].

The direct result of Archimandrite Porfiriy's activities was the consolidation of ecclesiastical ties between Russia and Ethiopia. Thus, for instance, already in 1865 an Ethiopian, Abdul Masakh, was enrolled at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy [7, p. 231].

In regard to the Ethiopian Church, Archimandrite Porfiriy said the same as he did of the Coptic Church: "The Abyssinians are not heretics. On the contrary they condemn the heresies of Arius, Macedonius, Nestorius, and Eutyches and hold to the Faith of Sts. Athanasius and Cyril. In their divine services and rites one sees clear Orthodoxy as the clear skies are seen in the lakes of Abyssinia".

Of great interest is the article by Archimandrite Porfiriy on the Ethiopian Church entitled: "The Ecclesiastical and Political Condition of Abyssinia Since Ancient Times" published in *The Transactions of the Kiev Theological Academy* in 1866 (No. 3, pp. 305-344; No. 4, pp. 556-604; No. 5, pp. 3-32; No. 6, pp. 142-167). This was the first study of Ethiopia in the Russian language. Presenting his work for publication, Archimandrite Porfiriy wrote addressing the Rector of the Kiev Theological Academy, Archimandrite Filaret: "I want only one thing: to widen our knowledge of the Christian East in which Abyssinia holds a prominent place, and prepare our union with it, which sooner or later will take place" [3, Vol. II, p. 946]. Subsequently too Archimandrite Porfiriy published his studies of the Ethiopian Church in *The Transactions of the Kiev Theological Academy* [8, 9]. Of special interest are his notes entitled "Involvement of Russia in the Fate of Abyssinia" [TKTA, 1866, No. 8, pp. 415-440], in which an attempt was made to find ways of rapprochement of the Russian and Ethiopian Churches. Father Porfiriy drew attention to the fact that even then the aspiration for autocephaly was dawning in the Ethiopian Church.

In the event of success in the development of relations with the Ethiopian Church, Archimandrite Porfiriy considered the basic aim to be the revival of dogmatic union between the Ethiopian and our Churches and through her with the entire Orthodox Catholic Church, without changing the outer forms of divine services [*ibid.*, p. 422].

He develops further this important idea in his notes. It seemed to him extremely important that no differences in cultural, historical and national traditions should affect the rapprochement of the Churches. Archimandrite Porfiriy stressed that in regard to the Ethiopian Church and her children we "shall not oblige them to observe the ecclesiastical and monastic rules of Athens or Jerusalem which are not applicable to the whole world, we shall not substitute St. Romanos Melodus for St. Hiared of Abyssinia".

In conclusion let us note the fact that many of the ideas expressed by Archimandrite Porfiriy over a hundred years ago in regard to the re-establishment of Church unity, are still topical, and some have even anticipated the morrow of ecumenism, having gone ahead of his time. As a comparison we may adduce the opinion of Prof. I. E. Troitsky of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy who in the 1870s was also engaged in the study of Christian unity. In his research: "Exposition of the Faith of the Armenian Church as Described by Nerses the Armenian Catholicos at the Demand of the God-Loving King Manuel of Greece" (St. Petersburg, 1875), Prof. I. E. Troitsky speaks more cautiously about the rapprochement of Orthodoxy with the non-Chalcedonian Churches:

"The Orthodox Church should abstain not only from any instructions and advice, but from the very raising of the question of reunion. This restraint in itself (...) would remove the principal obstacle, in our opinion, to reunion" [p. 338].

In August 1856, noting in one of his letters that it was the threshold of the millennium of the Russian State (862-1862), Archimandrite Porfiriy wrote: "Being aware of the importance of the times we are living in and remembering that the first millennium of the Russian State is coming to an end, I would like to hear the apocalypse, that is to say, the revelation of God's will for the second millennium". Trying to guess historical events, he correctly foretold the liberation of the Balkan nations from the Osman domination. And in so far as one of the basic obstacles in the way of rapprochement of Ancient Oriental and Orthodox Churches in Archimandrite Porfiriy's opinion was the unfavourable political situation in the Middle East the improvement of the situation seemed to him a pledge of the rapprochement between Orthodoxy and the Armenians, Syrian Jacobites, Copts and Abyssinians, with the preservation of their rites and hierarchy [3, Vol. I, p. 596].

In the summer of 1973, at the ecumenical centre of the Orthodox Church of Greece—the Penteli Monastery near Athens, Greece, there was a session of the joint subcommittee for the preparation of the official meeting of the theological commissions on dialogue between the Local Orthodox and Ancient Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Churches. This was the first session in line with the decision of the Inter-Orthodox Commission Dialogue with Ancient Oriental Churches in Addis Ababa in August 1971 on the one hand, and the Permanent Committee of Ancient Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Churches in Lebanon in 1972, on the other.

The Russian Orthodox Church was represented on the joint subcommittee by members of the Inter-Orthodox Commission, Archbishop Pitirim of Volokolamsk, Head of the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, and Prof. N. A. Zabolotsky of the Leningrad Theological Academy. It was testified at the time that "the success of the work of the subcommittee was due to a great extent to the previous attempts by both sides to establish doctrinal and liturgical unity, in which the Russian Orthodox Church had also taken part in the persons of her well-known hierarchs and theologians" [10]. One such prominent theologian of the Russians Church was Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky, who by his activities prepared and drew nearer the attainment of doctrinal unity of Christians.

And today when the Russian Orthodox Church is on the threshold of great jubilee—the millennium of the Baptism of Russ, one would like to express the hope that the ecumenical expectations of Bishop Porfiriy Uspensky, though in another form, the one with a firm theological foundation, and with the inevitable difficulties that arise during a dialogue taken into consideration, will in time be crowned with a steady advancement to the blessed goal: *That they all may be one* (Jn. 17. 21). It can be stated with full conviction that the works of the scholarly hierarch of the 19th century may prove to be very useful for modern ecumenical dialogue.

## In the Hope of Restoration of Communion between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches[1]

*Carrie Frederick Frost, Vigen Guroian, Jennifer Haddad Mosher, Valerie G. Zahirsky*

We wish to bring attention to one of the items not specifically included on the Great and Holy Council's agenda or in its preconciliar documents: the restoration of communion between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches. Our group is comprised of three Orthodox Christians and one Armenian Orthodox Christian, and we eagerly anticipate the day our churches will once again be united with each other.

The preconciliar document "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World" affirms that theological dialogue is "to reclaim the lost unity of Christians", but does not acknowledge the urgency and rightness of unity with the Oriental Churches, especially in light of the dire situation of these communities in the Middle East and North Africa. This lack of reference is in contrast to an earlier version of this document from 1986, which contained a section directly addressing bilateral talks with the Oriental Orthodox Churches (Third Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference).

The current "Relations" document does not acknowledge the fact that clergy and theologians have been meeting in dialogue for the past fifty years as the "Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue Between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches". The Oriental Orthodox Churches represented most recently in this dialogue are the Coptic, Syrian, Armenian Apostolic, and Malankara Orthodox Syrian Churches. The third official meeting of the Joint Commission (1990) affirmed that, "Both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition". Furthermore, the Joint Commission has determined that the differences in Christology are reconcilable and has called for a process toward full communion among these churches, including the lifting of the anathemas against the Oriental churches (1990 and 1993).

A Working Group for the Joint Commission on Dialogue met in November of 2014. Co-Chairman His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France affirmed "the very high priority accorded by the Orthodox Church to the official Theological Dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches". We seek for this "very high priority" to be affirmed and acted upon. The preconciliar document "Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World", states that, "The end of an official theological dialogue occurs with the completion of the relevant work of the Joint Theological Commission. This then requires the Chairman of the Inter-Orthodox Commission to submit a report to the Ecumenical Patriarch, who, with the consent of the Primates of the local Orthodox Churches, declares the conclusion of the dialogue". We look for these final steps of reconciliation with the Oriental Churches to be taken.

Three local churches from the Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Romania) and three churches from the Oriental Orthodox family (Alexandria, Antioch and Malankara-India) have declared their acceptance of the agreed statements and proposals from the Joint Commission. Although the 2014 working group acknowledged other churches have raised issues worthy of further discussion, the decision on the part of these local churches inspires us to believe the Holy Spirit is in our midst and restored communion within our reach.

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Lest the possibility of restored communion between Eastern and Oriental brothers and sisters in Christ flounders, we wish for this issue to remain in the atmosphere of the 2016 Council under the agenda item of "Relations of the Orthodox Church", in hope that a future such Council will take dramatic action for the rightful restoration of communion between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

# D. Short Chronology of the Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and the Oriental Orthodox Churches

***325***: At the Council of Nicaea I, the main accomplishments were the settlement of the Christological issue of the nature of the Son of God and his relationship to God the Father, and the construction of the first part of the Creed of Nicaea.

***381***: The Council of Constantinople I confirmed the Nicene Creed, expanding its doctrine to produce the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

***431***: The Council of Ephesus confirmed the original Nicene Creed and condemned the ruling of Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople that the Virgin Mary may be called the *Christotokos*, "Birth Giver of Christ" but not the *Theotokos*, "Birth Giver of God".

***451***: The Council of Chalcedon declared that Christ has two natures (*physeis*) in one person (*hypostasis*).

***482***: The emperor Zeno tried to accommodate both pro- and anti- Chalcedonian sentiment in the empire by imposing the *Henotikon*, an edict which downplayed Chalcedon as doctrinally normative by ignoring the *Tome* of Leo and accepting Cyril's Twelve Chapters (his Third Letter to Nestorius) as authoritative.

***6th century***: The emperor Justin I (518 to 527) and his nephew Justinian I (527 to 565) abandoned the *Henotikon* and sought to reimpose a Chalcedonian line. This renewed attempt to unite the empire under the Definition of Chalcedon has been called "neo-Chalcedonian" because it took the weaknesses of the Definition into account and sought to remedy them.

***532***: The emperor Justinian arranged a conference in Constantinople between a small number of representatives from both the Chalcedonian and the non-Chalcedonian sides. His intention seems to have been to discover what was needed to make Chalcedon acceptable to the followers of Severus. At the end of the conference Justinian offered the miaphysites generous terms. They could keep the mia-physis formula provided they did not anathematize Chalcedon's two-natures formula. But for them nothing short of the setting aside of Chalcedon would do. The acceptance of Leo's Tome as canonical, the exclusion of the phrase "from two natures" from the Definition, and the condemnation of Dioscorus all made the Council of Chalcedon in their view irremediable. Justinian, however, may not have given up all hope of reconciling them.

***551***: In his edict *On the Orthodox Faith*, Justinian explains that the *mia-physis* formula is acceptable if interpreted as Cyril intended, which means that the word "nature" in the phrase "one incarnate nature" must be taken to mean "hypostasis" or "person". This is also clear from Cyril's Second Letter to Succensus.

***553***: Canon 8 of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (together with the edict of 551) was compatible with the teaching of Severus and did not contribute to the hardening of the schism between the imperial Church and the miaphysites.

***7th century:*** Emperor Heraclius (610-641) and Patriarch Sergius of Constantinople (610-638) made a systematic attempt to achieve a compromise solution to the tragic split in the ecclesial Body of the East.

***633***: An agreement between Patriarch Cyrus of Alexandria and the Coptic hierarchy proved insufficient to heal the schism.

***638***: An imperial edict, the *Ekthesis*, was issued by Heraclius prohibiting any debate about Christ's *energeiai* but asserting a single will in him.

***680***: The Council of Constantinople III (or the Sixth Ecumenical Council) affirmed that Christ had both a human and a divine will and repudiated monothelitism, a doctrine that had won widespread support when formulated in 638. The council condemned monoenergism and monothelitism as heresies. The controversy had been provoked by a theological formula that predicated the existence of two natures and one act (ἐνέργεια) in Christ. This formula artificially combined two separate statements: that Christ had two natures and that He performed one act. The former statement was derived from Chalcedonian theology while the latter came from the terminology of Severus, the Patriarch of Antioch (465-538), a leader of the resistance to Chalcedon. The first part of the formula, "two natures", was meant to satisfy the Chalcedonians, while the second part, "one action", was meant to please the anti-Chalcedonians. Nevertheless, the Oriental Orthodox Christians still receive condemnation of monoenergism and monothelitism personally. This is because they believe that we can only speak about single energeia and will in Christ. The Eastern Orthodox do not accept this language. That is the difference between the theological language of Chalcedon, which allows both expressions: one nature and two natures of Christ, - and Constantinople III, which allows only the language of two energeiai and wills.

***692***: The Quinisext Council (or Council in Trullo) was mostly an administrative council for raising some local canons to ecumenical status, establishing principles of clerical discipline, addressing the Biblical canon, without determining matters of doctrine. The Eastern Orthodox Church does not consider it to be a full-fledged council in its own right, viewing it instead as an extension of the fifth and sixth councils. It gave ecclesiastical sanction to the Pentarchy as the government of the state Church of the Roman Empire.

***787***: The Council of Nicaea II (or Seventh Ecumenical Council) restored the veneration of icons and ended the first iconoclasm.

***9th century***: The correspondence of Patriarch Photius of Constantinople with King Ashot of Armenia and with the Catholicos Zachariah of the Armenians (855-877) met with positive responses, as appears from Photius' Encyclical Epistle (867), although no substantial result ensued from the venture.

***12th century***: The Church union initiatives of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) towards the Catholicos Gregory III (1113-1166) and the Catholicos Nerses IV (1166-1173) of the Armenians were of greater significance.

***mid 19th century***: Bishop Porfyr Uspensky of the Russian Orthodox Church (1804-1885), Vicar of the Eparchy of Kiev, also the founder of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem and orientalist, had very friendly contacts in Russia, Palestine and Egypt with the Oriental Orthodox prelates, clergy and monks. He has studied these Churches and written important works about them. He tried to reunite the Russian Orthodox Church with the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

***1930***: The joint meeting of the Inter-Orthodox Commission on Mount Athos did consider the possibility of theological dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches.

***1951***: On the 1500th anniversary of the Council of Chalcedon, Patriarch Athenagoras and the Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople formally called for the establishment of a process of dialogue that would lead to the healing of the schism. In this encyclical, the patriarch referred to St. John of Damascus, who claimed that those who did not accept the terminology of Chalcedon were schismatics (because they separated at the Council of Chalcedon in 415) but Orthodox in everything else.

***1961***: The real impulse for the Dialogue came from the First Pan-Orthodox Conference on Rhodes where the Oriental Orthodox Churches were also represented. After this Conference the Eastern Orthodox Church formally recognized that its relationship with the Oriental Orthodox Churches was one of the most urgent matters awaiting serious attention.

***11-15 August 1964***: The First Unofficial Consultation between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox/non Chalcedonian Churches organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC), through Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios (then working in the General Secretariate of the WCC) and Professor Nikos Nissiotis (then at the Ecumenical Institute of the WCC in Bossey/Geneva) was held at Aarhus (Denmark).

***7-14 July 1965***: A statement was issued by all the Oriental Orthodox Churches meeting in Addis Ababa to take up the question of their relationship with the Eastern Orthodox Churches as a first ecumenical step.

***25-29 July 1967***: The Second Unofficial Consultation between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox/non Chalcedonian Churches organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) was held in Bristol (England).

***1968***: The Fourth Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference (in Chambésy) appointed a preparatory commission for dialogue with the Oriental Orthodox Churches, whose mandate was to prepare for the dialogue in accordance with the wish already expressed at the pan-Orthodox level for such a dialogue (encyclicals and replies), and the wish expressed more than once on the Oriental Orthodox side for union with Orthodoxy.

***16-21 August 1970***: The Third Unofficial Consultation between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox/non Chalcedonian Churches organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) was held in Geneva (Switzerland).

***1970***: The Ethiopian Orthodox Church states that as to the two natures of Christ the Dyophysites and non-Chalcedonians are one: it is a matter of interpretation after the union of the two natures.

***22-23 January 1971***: The Fourth Unofficial Consultation between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox/non Chalcedonian Churches organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) was held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

***February 1979***: During the one-day session of the preparatory commission held at Chambésy (Geneva), the Coptic Patriarch Shenouda III paid a visit to the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

***10-15 December 1985***: The Official Dialogue began in Chambésy with the First Meeting of the Joint Commission of The Official Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches in Chambésy (Geneva).

***16-19 November 1987*** A Joint Declaration of the Patriarchs of the Middle East (On the Unity of the Faith between the Chalcedonians and the Non-Chalcedonian Churches) was issued at in St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt.

***20-24 June 1989***: The Second Meeting of the Joint Commission of The Official Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches was held at the Monastery of St. Bishoy (Egypt)

***23-28 September 1990***: The Third Meeting of the Joint Commission of The Official Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches was held at Chambésy (Geneva)

***November 1990***: Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue (Letter of Metropolitan Bishoy of Damietta, Egypt, to Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland to inform him that the Agreed Statements of September 1990 and of June 1989 were accepted by the Holy Synod).

***12 November 1991***: Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch in Damascus (On the Relations between the Eastern/Greek Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Churches).

***1-6 November 1993*** The Fourth Meeting of the Joint Commission of The Official Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches was held at Chambésy (Geneva).

***8-9 December 1994***: Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue in Bucharest.

***December 1994:*** Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue in Moscow.

***1995***: Memorandum of the Sacred Community of the Holy Mountain Concerning the Dialogue between the Orthodox and the Anti-Chalcedonian Churches.

***February 1997:*** Decisions of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Official Theological Dialogue in Moscow.

***2001:*** Pastoral Agreement Between the Coptic Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Alexandria, signed by Patriarchs Petros VII and Shenouda III, on baptism and marriage.

***March 2005***: An Inter-Orthodox Theological Committee for Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Oriental Orthodox Churches met at Chambésy, Geneva, with only the Eastern Orthodox present, headed by Metropolitan Emmanuel Adamakis of France who was appointed in 2001 to replace Metropolitan Damaskinos of Switzerland (1982-2001).

***2014:*** Moran Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, in his statement of faith as the Patriarch-elect of the Syrian Orthodox Church, stated his acceptance of the general statements of faith produced as a result of the theological dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches in particular the statements produced at Chambésy in 1990 and 1993 and he consented to the agreement made between the Syrian Orthodox Church with the Greek Orthodox Church of Antioch in 1991.

***24-25 November 2014:*** A working group of official delegates met in Athens in order to lay down a road map for the future work of the Joint Commission. The working group reviewed the achievements of the Joint Commission so far. Co-Chairman HE Metropolitan Emmanuel of France called for a systematic evaluation of all the theological critiques on the proposals of the Joint Commission and for a theological defence against all prejudices and polemical arguments. Co-Chairman HE Metropolitan Bishoy of Damiette gave an interpretation of the First Agreed Statement on Christology of the historic official dialogue between the two families held at St. Bishoy Monastery, Egypt, in 1989. There were also separate meetings of the families to discuss the remaining issues from the perspective of each family as well as to find the common way forward.

# List of Contributors

Catholicos ***Aram I*** of Cilicia in Lebanon served for two terms (1991-2005) as Moderator of the World Council of Churches in Geneva and since 2006 has been an honorary president of the World Religions for Peace and a president of the Middle East Council of Churches. The author of several books and articles, he has participated in the Official Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox.

Metropolitan ***Damaskinos (Papandreou)*** (d. 2011) was Co-President of the Official Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches. From 1969 to 2001 he was in charge of the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva. In 1982 he became the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Switzerland. He remained in this post as a great artisan of the dialogue until he suffered a stroke in 2001. He was succeeded by Metropolitan Emmanuel (Adamakis). His doctoral dissertation (in Greek) was entitled *Establishment and Organization of the Armenian Church until the 4th Ecumenical Council: a Historico-critical Study* (Athens, 1966).

Metropolitan ***Georges (Khodr)*** of Mount Lebanon is a theologian and writer well-known in his own country of Lebanon and in the Orthodox world in general. For many years he has been an active member of the Official Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox.

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